



Freight train derailed in Mansfield: Route 32 closed, shelter-in-place ordered



Photos of the Mansfield train derailment. More than a dozen cars were derailed on Thursday morning. PHOTO COURTESY OF AARON FLAUM/ FACEBOOK

by Patrick Boots
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM
patrick.boots@uconn.edu

A freight train derailed in Mansfield Depot on Thursday morning, with several railcars falling into the Wilimantic River, causing a shelter-in-place order and a continuous, multi-day area closure and cleanup operation.

The derailment happened around 9 a.m. near the Eagleville Pond in the vicinity of Stafford Road, also known as Connecticut Route 32, and involved a train with

“It is more of a ‘keep your windows closed, be aware, be alert’ just in case something does happen.”

JOHN ROACHE, MANSFIELD’S
FIRE CHIEF

41 cars and two locomotives, according to officials.

The rear 10 cars derailed, nine of which rolled over on their side with six carrying liquid propane fuel. Other cars on the train were transporting goods including lumber and food-grade grease. No leaks were detected from the cars containing propane, according to officials.

“Fortunately, with the lack of a leak, we didn’t have to do any evacuations,” said

Adam Libros, Mansfield’s emergency management director, Thursday afternoon.

In an abundance of caution, officials issued a shelter-in-place order for residents within a half mile of the scene.

“It is more of a ‘keep your windows closed, be aware, be alert’ [directive] just in case something does happen,” said John Roache, Mansfield’s fire chief during the press conference. “We continue to monitor... to make sure there are no spills, no leaks, and no hazard to the community.”

One conductor and one engineer were onboard the train when the derailment occurred, but no injuries were reported.

Although no dangerous propane leaks were detected, over 2,000 gallons of grease spilled and had to be contained.

“There does not appear to be any hazard to [the grease],” Roache said. “It is basically animal fat.”

Stafford Road remains closed to motorists between South Eagleville Road and Route 44 East. Mansfield town officials said the area closure was anticipated to last days.

Emergency responders and hazmat crews from the Mansfield and University of Connecticut fire departments, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection responded to the scene.

“We are going to do a continuous monitoring as long as it takes, as many days, whatever the time frame is, and that’s going to be dependent on the train company and their re-

covery operations,” said Rich Scalora, the emergency response coordinator for DEEP.

Mansfield Town Manager Ryan Aylesworth declared a local state emergency to facilitate the response and cleanup operation.

Although the University of Connecticut is located nearby to the incident, university officials said the accident “does not have any impact on the operations or safety of UConn’s campuses” in a UConn Alert message, but recommended students and visitors to seek an alternate route during the closure.

The New England Central Railroad, operator of the freight train, dispatched additional crews from Maryland and Pennsylvania to assist with the cleanup. The railroad is a subsidiary of the international Genesee and Wyoming railroad holding company headquartered in Darien.

Brian McClain, vice president for G&W’s northeast division, said that the train originated in Palmer, Massachusetts and was en route southbound toward Willimantic. The single-tracked rail line where the incident occurred, also owned by NECR, stretches from New London northward to Vermont and is a Class III railroad.

Officials said it is too soon to determine a specific cause for the incident, but manifests and onboard data are being investigated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Cranes and other heavy duty clean-up equipment will remain on the scene until operations can be restored.

“The Town of Mansfield enormously appreciates the response...from all of our different agencies and partners,” Aylesworth said. “This is why we have mutual aid, [and] it really takes a team, for any community in their time of need.”

He noted that “any number of things...could have happened,” in regard to a potential environmental impact, and that the community is “very fortunate.”

While the corridor where the derailment occurred is an active freight line, it does not meet current standards for passenger rail service without significant refurbishment. Amtrak last operated limited service, as part of its Montrealer long-distance route, until 1995.

“Significant rehabilitation of

the right-of-way is anticipated to improve speed and reliability that would provide for competitive passenger rail service,” a 2017 study assessing the feasibility of such service states. “The Vermont portion of the line was recently upgraded and is assumed to be in a good state or repair; full or partial rehabilitation of 111 miles of the right-of-way in Massachusetts and...[would cost] an estimated \$277.5 million.”

The proposed Mohegan Line passenger rail service, which would use the NECR corridor, would see stations serving points between New London and Massachusetts, including new stations in Willimantic and Storrs-Mansfield.



This Thursday, a train derailed near the UConn Storrs campus.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LIVE STORM CHASERS/FACEBOOK

For more...

dailycampus.com

[The_DailyCampus](#)

[The_DailyCampus](#)

[DailyCampus](#)



BIRDBRAINED SCIENCE | PAGE 6
Get on my wavelength



WUTHERING HEIGHTS | PAGE 7
‘Wuthering Heights’ is not a romance!



POINTCOUNTER-POINT | PAGE 12
Who will win the superowl: Patriots vs Seahawks

WE ARE NOT THE
DAILY DIGEST

News

UConn-based project gets NSF grant to prepare for severe weather

by **Kevin Guinan**
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
kcg21003@uconn.edu

A project by the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation won a grant for over \$250,000 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) after the Trump administration disrupted the award process, according to the project's principal investigator.

The project, called "Identifying Community Need-Based Adaptation and Resilience Priorities in the U.S. Northeast," is part of the first phase of NSF's Regional Resilience Innovation Incubators (R2I2) grant program.

A second phase of the project will be accepting proposals this fiscal year, with anticipated funds for an annual \$3 million for up to five years, according to the grant website.

James O'Donnell, the principal investigator of the project, said that for the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) to receive the grant, an NSF program manager had to help align their R2I2 proposal with shifting federal priorities.

"There was a review process that was novel by the [new] administration," O'Donnell said, explaining that CIRCA was notified about the review

when the NSF was making the award. "They were looking for proposals that were addressing the impacts of climate change, which they don't believe in, and were trying not to fund those."

O'Donnell said that a key goal of the R2I2 grant was to make the scientific work done at the NSF more relevant to regular people without scientific backgrounds. To align CIRCA's proposal for the grant with new priorities of the Trump administration, he said all that was needed was a few last-minute grammar changes.

"The NSF program manager said [CIRCA's] proposal had a lot of climate change in the title, and it was really about severe weather impacts," O'Donnell said, adding how the only thing changed was the title. He speculated that due to the small nature of the award, which has a maximum of \$500,000 for the first phase, the Trump administration was probably only scanning the titles.

In addition to the small grant sizes in the R2I2 grant, O'Donnell said that storm repercussions could be another reason the Trump administration didn't disrupt the funding further.

"The administration doesn't really prioritize climate

change, but they are aware that severe weather has negative impacts generally," O'Donnell said. "So, the climate change part got taken out."

The first phase was comprised of 16 smaller awards that went to the planning and prioritization of solutions for regional climate-based challenges. Proposals for the second phase of R2I2 funding will be accepted based on a merit and performance review of the projects in the first phase, according to NSF's website.

CIRCA, which combines research and regulatory expertise from UConn and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, submitted its phase-one R2I2 proposal in Dec. 2024.

The main mission of the project is to address climate adaptation needs like reducing flood risk, protecting vulnerable populations from heat related illness and preserving coastal infrastructure, according to the CIRCA website.

CIRCA will use a 10-step implementation plan to deliver this mission. O'Donnell said one of these steps that he is least excited for is the selection process to prioritize a specific proposal for the second phase.

O'Donnell explained how the amount of feedback CIRCA is getting on which challenges



Sign made to protest climate change. The University of Connecticut got a grant of over \$250,000 from the National Science Foundation.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS.COM

should be prioritized makes it hard to reach a consensus on what to focus on in the proposal. He mentioned two possible challenges that CIRCA could end up focusing on: coastal erosion and predicting precipitation increases.

"If towns really think it's important to understand how effective a living shoreline technology is in reducing coastal erosion, then we can design experiments in mathematical models and monitoring programs," O'Donnell said.

A successful first phase of an R2I2 grant will also incorporate where workforce development is needed so programs can be created as soon as the second phase starts, according to O'Donnell.

The end date for the first phase of the grant is estimated for Aug. 31, 2027, according to NSF's website.

As the due date for the second proposal nears, O'Donnell said he's never disappointed when proposals to the NSF don't get funded because of how competitive they are.

Pope Leo XIV calls for the US and Cuba to partake in peaceful dialogue

by **Patrick Boots**
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM
patrick.boots@uconn.edu

Amid escalating U.S. sanctions targeting oil shipments to Cuba, political leaders and Catholic Church officials are voicing reactions, with Pope Leo XIV and Cuban bishops urging dialogue to prevent further suffering for the Cuban people.

According to the White House official government page, President Donald Trump signed an "Executive Order declaring a national emergency and establishing a process to impose tariffs on goods from countries that sell or otherwise provide oil to Cuba, protecting U.S. national security and foreign policy from the Cuban regime's malign actions and policies." This declaration followed the early-January ousting of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, a major Cuban ally.

Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel said "[t]his new measure demonstrates the fascist,

criminal and genocidal nature of a cabal that has hijacked the interests of the American people for purely personal gain."

Pope Leo XIV, according to a Reuters article, stated that he was concerned about tensions between the two countries and called for "sincere and effective"

"I echo the message of Cuban bishops"

POPE LEO XIV

dialogue to prevent suffering for the Cuban people.

According to OSVNews, on Jan. 31, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Cuba stated, in a translated statement originally published on Iglesia Cubana, that the complete elimination of any possibility of oil entering the country raised serious concerns, particularly for the

most vulnerable populations.

"The risk of social chaos and violence among the people of the same nation is real," said the bishops. "No Cuban of good will would rejoice at this."

The bishops advocated for good communication as that's how people will understand each other, OSVNews further reported. The bishops further stated that in the presence of goodwill, there is a possibility to resolve issues in addition to truth and goodness.

The pope stated in his Angelus Address, "I echo the message of the Cuban bishops, inviting all responsible parties to promote a sincere and effective dialogue, in order to avoid violence and every action that could increase the suffering of the dear Cuban people. May the Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre assist and protect all of the children of that beloved land!"



Pope Leo XIV giving a sermon to the church. The Pope called for dialogue between the United States and Cuba amid rising tensions.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @PONTIFEX/INSTAGRAM

The Daily Campus

Printing since 1896, The Daily Campus is the oldest and largest independent student publication at the University of Connecticut. The Daily Campus circulates 1,500 newspapers daily and strives to serve the student body by delivering accurate, relevant and timely news and content, both in print and online at DailyCampus.com. Our staff is comprised entirely of students, with roughly 200 undergraduates gaining professional development while contributing to the daily production of the paper, with positions including writers, photographers, copy editors, page layout designers, graphic designers, advertisement representatives, receptionists, delivery drivers and digital producers. Thanks for reading.

Want to advertise in print or online?
businessmanager@dailycampus.com

Corrections and Clarifications:
Send Corrections to EIC@DailyCampus.com

Thursday, February 5, 2026

Copy Editors: Mikayla Bunnell & Vangmayee Upadhyay
News Designer: Sarah Cartagena
Life Designer: Christina Roby
Sports Designer: Camille Kiang
Opinion Designer: Isabella Kulawik
Photo Producer: Sarah Turner

Karla Perez, Editor-in-Chief
Connor Lafferty, Managing Editor
Hayden Cromer, Business Manager
Ky'Lynn Monts, Digital Editor
Colbi Loranger, Associate Managing Editor
Isabella Kulawik, Associate Managing Editor
Sarah Vial, Associate Digital Editor

Jenna Outcalt
News Editor
Pierce Colfer
Associate News Editor
Bridget Bronsdon
Sports Editor
Avery Becker
Associate Sports Editor
Connor Sharp
Photo Editor
Emma Meidinger
Associate Photo Editor
Samantha Brody
Life Editor
Maleena Muzio
Associate Life Editor

Tomas Hinckley
Opinion Editor
Patrick Minnerly
Associate Opinion Editor
Samantha Hass
Artist Editor
Lillian LaFemina
Associate Artist Editor
Noa Climor
Outreach/Social Media Coordinator
Kayden Lynch
Associate SMOG
Karla Guerrero
Circulation Manager
Valley Publishing Company
Derby, Conn.

For more information about getting involved as an editorial, business or digital employee:

Editorial · managingeditor@dailycampus.com
Business · businessmanager@dailycampus.com
Digital · digital@dailycampus.com

Prefer to read our content online?

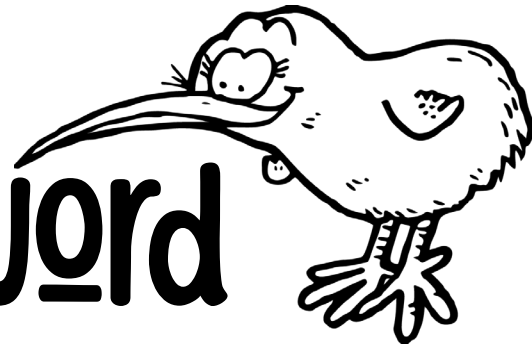
Check out our newly redesigned website at dailycampus.com and follow us on social media.

Instagram · The_DailyCampus
Facebook · The Daily Campus
Twitter · The_DailyCampus

Want to write, photograph or draw for The Daily Campus ?

The Daily Campus welcomes writers, photographers and artists of all backgrounds, interests, majors and levels of experience. To get involved, it's as easy as attending section meetings on Sunday nights, all at the Daily Campus building, (1266 Storrs Road) or reaching out to an email below:

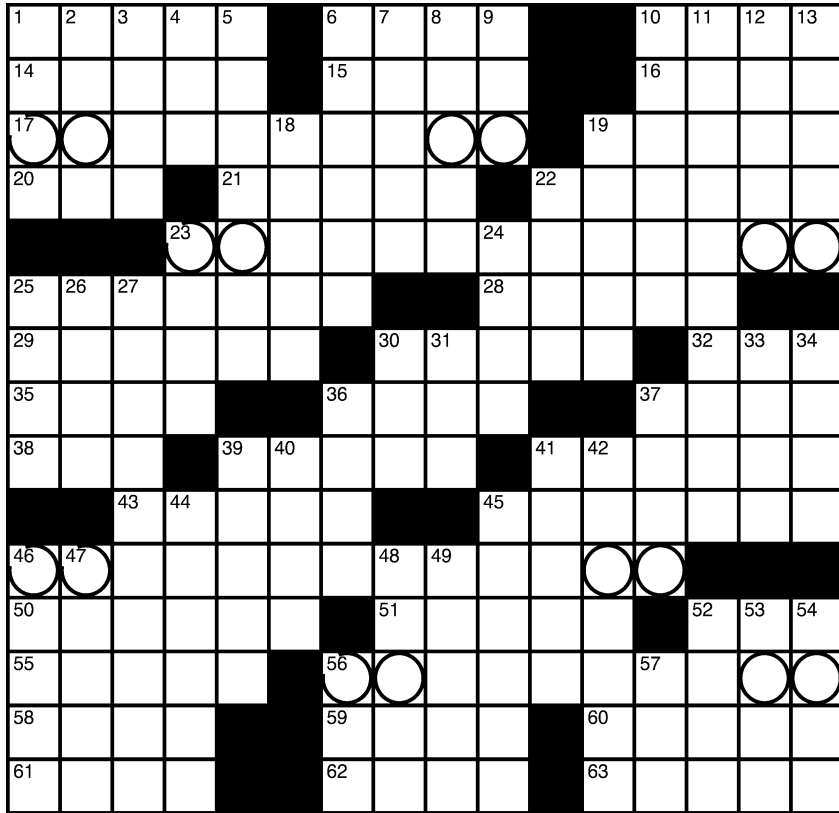
Opinion (Meetings at 5 p.m.)
opinion@dailycampus.com
News (Meetings at 5 p.m.)
news@dailycampus.com
Life (Meetings at 6 p.m.)
life@dailycampus.com
Sports (Meetings at 7 p.m.)
sports@dailycampus.com
Photo (Meetings at 9 p.m.)
photo@dailycampus.com
Artists (Meetings at 9 p.m.)
artists@dailycampus.com



The Daily crossword

- ACROSS**
- 1 Android, for one
 - 6 Cat's eye, often
 - 10 Genesis name
 - 14 Dazzled
 - 15 Goals for some Olympians
 - 16 Frozen Four game
 - 17 *Get one over on
 - 19 Mountain abode
 - 20 Bilingual subj.
 - 21 Touch off
 - 22 Handle
 - 23 *Action blockbuster with several sequels
 - 25 Going-out outfits?
 - 28 World-weary
 - 29 Annual Queens sporting event
 - 30 "Let's see if you're bluffing"
 - 32 Wanders around ORD?
 - 35 With 36- and 37-Across, get by, or how to find a second answer to each starred clue
 - 36 See 35-Across
 - 37 See 35-Across
 - 38 Big primate
 - 39 Enclosures in a 19-Down
 - 41 Nutty Alpine cheese
 - 43 Rushing sound
 - 45 Women's liberal arts college in Atlanta
 - 46 *Antioxidant-rich treat
 - 50 Actress Cuthbert
 - 51 Lingering scents
 - 52 Penny prez
 - 55 Ultrasound subject
 - 56 *Chin-wag
 - 58 Done
 - 59 Went down
 - 60 Doctoral hurdle
 - 61 "Razzle Dazzle" singer in the 2002 film "Chicago"
 - 62 Just
 - 63 Running behind

- DOWN**
- 1 Rank
 - 2 Weight
 - 3 Sitcom pioneer
 - 4 Parliament member
 - 5 "I want to learn how to do that!"



By Brian Callahan & Geoffrey Schorkopf 2/6/26

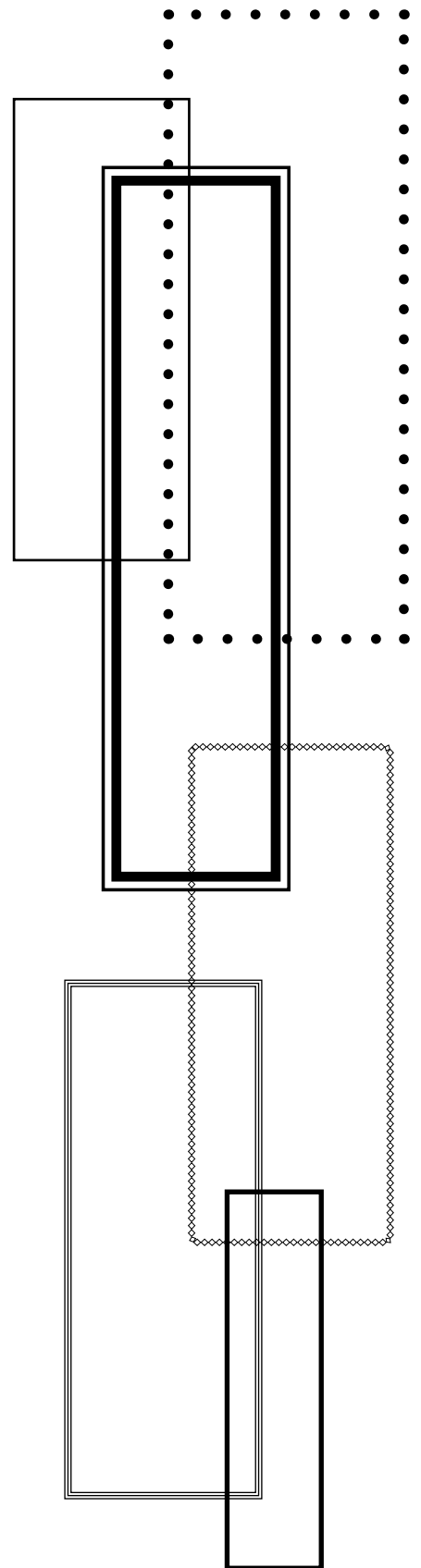
- 6 Walks with confidence
- 7 Crib sheet?
- 8 ___ beauty
- 9 Judgy sound
- 10 Yoga poses
- 11 Student group that may encourage members to go pro?
- 12 Compañero
- 13 Worker in a rush?
- 18 Hymn of praise
- 19 Waterway with 39-Across
- 22 Move (about)
- 23 End of some races
- 24 Chicago Booth degs.
- 25 Big mountain cat
- 26 "Right this second!" letters
- 27 Part of a crack team?
- 30 Doodle medium
- 31 LP successors
- 33 Genesis name
- 34 Oodles
- 36 Fun word to shout into a canyon
- 37 Unit with Roman and "country" varieties

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

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

©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC 2/6/26

- 39 Highlands waters
- 40 Gp. concerned with NSFW material?
- 41 In pieces
- 42 Free throw, e.g.
- 44 "Fine, whatever"
- 45 At a snail's pace
- 46 Clear up, as a windshield
- 47 Naproxen brand
- 48 Poet Leonard
- 49 Scott who wrote "Island of the Blue Dolphins"
- 52 Way off
- 53 Like Mr. Johnson on "Abbott Elementary"
- 54 Site with a Home Favorites section
- 56 Fiscal exec
- 57 Flop___: period of setbacks, in slang



& SUDOKU

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

Level **1** **2** **3** **4**

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit from 1 to 9. For strategies on solving Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk.

Solution to Thursday's puzzle

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

CLASSIFIEDS

Policy: Classifieds are non-refundable. Credit will be given if an error materially affects the meaning of the ad and only for the first incorrect insertion. Ads will only be printed if they are accompanied by both first and last name as well as telephone number. Names and numbers may be subject to verification. All advertising is subject to acceptance by The Daily Campus, which reserves the right to reject any ad copy at its sole discretion. The Daily Campus does not knowingly accept ads of a fraudulent nature.

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

The Phone Was Always The Problem:

Healthy screen time habits for the college student



Friends take a selfie during Sunset Yoga on Horsebarn Hill. Hanging out with friends is a good alternative to scrolling on your phone. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONN/INSTAGRAM

by **Samantha Brody**
LIFE EDITOR
SHE/HER/HERS
sab23059@uconn.edu

If there's one thing every teenager and most 20-something-year-olds have heard from their parents growing up, it's my father's favorite phrase: "Get off of that phone!"

Smartphones are everywhere and with everyone — if you can step onto the University of Connecticut campus but can't spot at least five people on their phones, I'd ask you to get your eyes checked. None of this is a surprise, however. Last month, Pew Research reported that about 41% of U.S. adults said they used the internet "almost constantly," and another 43% said they use it "several times a day." That's 84% of Americans!

While the internet can provide access to a myriad of opportunities and knowledge, it has some drawbacks. The department of psychiatry at the University of Columbia linked smartphone and social

media usage to a rise in anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation and difficulty sleeping.

If you're reading this, you most likely have a smartphone in your pocket, in your hand or next to you on a nearby table or chair. That smartphone also most likely has at least one social media app downloaded on it — my best guess is Instagram. Just like the rest of America, you stay connected to the internet.

However, just getting rid of your phone is easier said than done. If using your phone brings with it a host of mental health issues (which, if you're like me, you've noticed get worse when your screen time rises), why not just get rid of it? Well, in a digital world where school, work and friends are all loaded into one phone, there's no removing its influence. So how can we lower the time we spend on our phones?

Step 1: Lose the headphones.

After losing my AirPods on vacation during winter break, I made the decision to avoid

buying a new pair. I didn't feel like spending the money, but I also saw it as an opportunity to experiment. I had been using my phone a bit more than I liked, so why not try living life without any headphones?

Being a UConn student, people are always around, whether that be in classrooms, dining halls or your own dorm room. If you're able to avoid using your headphones for the day, you'll find it impossible to scroll on TikTok or Instagram between classes. Taking away access to social media can be an incredible way to connect with the world around you.

I've also experienced plenty of social benefits! Wearing headphones is a key signal to those around you that you aren't interested in having a conversation. If you avoid wearing headphones while out and about, it becomes much easier to talk with others, especially when you're waiting for class to start — it's basic human decency at this point.

Step 2: Delete the apps.

Social media is where, in my opinion, most people get sucked into a rabbit hole. "Doomscrolling" is a real thing, and it can make it difficult to sleep or complete tasks. For myself, the greatest cause of doomscrolling is Instagram, by far, and I've found it incredibly beneficial to just... delete the app.

Since all social media apps are attached to an account, deleting the app makes no real change — you can always redownload it later with no changes, or switch to only using it on desktop. It can be easy to feel a little bit of FOMO out of the experience, but trust me, it'll help you in the long run.

Step 3: Find replacements.

The best part about lowering screen time is finally having access to the real world again. Once you've deleted your most used apps and gotten rid of daily distractions, you'll most likely feel a lot more productive. It's time to find some hobbies!

Catching up on schoolwork is always a great way to fill the time, and reading is one of the most beneficial activities a

person can do. After I lost my headphones over winter break, I had a lot of empty space I wanted to fill. I couldn't watch YouTube while I ate my meals, so I instead switched to reading. Sketching and journaling are also high up on my list, as I've been meaning to start journaling for some time now.

If you're struggling to stay off your phone, it could also be helpful to find a more productive way to fill the time using your smartphone. I highly recommend downloading Substack — it's an easy way to still feel connected to the ever-changing world around you, but most of the content is a lot more intellectually stimulating than what you'll find on TikTok or Instagram.

And of course, the best way to fill your time is to enjoy it. Do whatever you find makes you feel best, whether that is making art, going on walks or hanging out with friends. It's time to unplug and enjoy your time in the real world.



University of Connecticut students studying in Wilbur Cross Library. One way to limit screentime is to delete distracting apps. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONN/INSTAGRAM

THE BIG GAME:

What to watch on Super Sunday when football isn't your thing

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS



One of the puppies that will be in Puppy Bowl XXII. The Puppy Bowl airs on Feb. 8 at 2 p.m. PHOTO COURTESY OF @THEPUPPYSHERE/INSTAGRAM.

by Patrick Boots
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
patrick.boots@uconn.edu

It's that time of year again. The Super Bowl — America's biggest sporting event — is set to dominate screens and conversations across the country this Sunday, Feb. 8. But whether you couldn't care less about football or just want to spend the night watching something different, there's a whole world of programming and activities outside the Big Game that deserve your attention.

Couch-Side Sports

If other sports are what you're looking for, CBS stations (WFSB Channel 3 Hartford) will show PBR bull-riding at 12 p.m., a men's college basketball matchup between the Michigan Wolverines and Ohio State Buckeyes at 1 p.m., then continuing coverage of PGA Tour golf at the final round of the Phoenix Open.

For fans of women's college basketball, the matchup on ABC stations (WTNH Channel 8 New Haven and WGGB Channel 40 Springfield)

may be one worth peeking at: the Tennessee Lady Vols take on the South Carolina Gamecocks. Both regarded as worthy contenders for the UConn women's basketball team, tip-off is set for 3 p.m.

Fox stations (WTIC Channel 61 Hartford) also have a college basketball double-header, starting off with the men's Texas Tech Red Raiders taking on the West Virginia Mountaineers at 1 p.m. and then the women's UCLA Bruins against the Michigan Wolverines scheduled at 3 p.m.

Coverage of the Winter Olympics in Milan, Italy continues on USA Network, with events including Women's Group A hockey, Men's Snowboard Big Air and curling. Extended Olympics coverage will also be on NBC stations later in the evening.

If you still want to keep up on the Big Game without being glued to your TV set, NFL Network will broadcast a live scoreboard with voice-over analysis from football insiders and notable commentators.

Furry and Feel-Good

Animal lovers are covered: "Puppy Bowl XXI" on Animal Planet returns with all the adorable chaos you crave starting at 2 p.m. This annual fan-favorite pits Team Ruff against Team Fluff for the "Lombarky" trophy in a cuddle-friendly Super Bowl spoof to help raise awareness of animal adoption.

Prefer something on the dramatic or cinematic side? Tons of networks are stacking movies and specials to fill your Sunday lineup. Cable channels often run blockbuster lineups, ranging from comedic crowd-pleasers to classic crime thrillers — and marathons of your favorite shows.

FX starts up a modern Star Wars marathon at 4 p.m. with "The Force Awakens" followed by "The Last Jedi" and "The Rise of Skywalker" through 1:30 a.m. A number of films from the "Harry Potter" series will be shown on the E! channel throughout the afternoon, and you can also catch the 1978 classic "Grease" on Freeform at 6:45 p.m.

and "Monsters University" on Disney Channel at 7 p.m.

TBS has programmed back-to-back episodes of the 90s sitcom "Friends" and "The Big Bang Theory", and Comedy Central has an all-day showing of classic "The Office" episodes. The Food Network throws it back with a marathon of "Beat Bobby Flay" shows.

Who says you can't stream, too? Netflix's "Bridgerton" just dropped the first half of its fourth season, following a fresh romantic arc through the ballrooms of Regency London, where whispered scandals travel faster than horse-drawn carriages.

Of course, other demand offerings and streaming services offer an endless amount of content to enjoy at your own leisure while others are glued to the Super Bowl.

PBS stations (WEDH Channel 24 Hartford and WGBY Channel 57 Springfield) have scheduled special editions of beloved shows like Antiques Roadshow and Masterpiece Theatre's seasonal premieres. These feel-good, intellectu-

ally stimulating offerings are a great alternative for folks who love storytelling without the sports soundtrack.

You can have a Super Sunday!

Of course, not all alternatives require a screen. If you're craving something more hands-on, consider making a night of it with friends, with activities like a cooking challenge, a game night with board games or card games or even knock out the week's assignments together and celebrate with snacks once you're done.

These can be a great way to meet people who are equally uninterested in gridiron glory.

While millions will be glued to the Super Bowl, there's a whole spectrum of entertainment waiting for the rest of us — from puppy antics to movie marathons, from DIY parties to quiet nights in. So even if football isn't your sport, this Super Sunday doesn't have to be boring. Tune into what you love and enjoy!



Jeremiah Tapes of the Ohio State Buckeyes during a game. The Buckeyes men's basketball team play the Michigan Wolverines on Feb. 8 at 1 p.m. PHOTO COURTESY OF @BUCKEYE.LANDING/INSTAGRAM



Life

CLIPART COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS

BIRDBRAINED SCIENCE: Get on my wavelength



Two women talking and working out together outside. Studies show that people interacting with each other display matching brain activity. PHOTO COURTESY OF PEXELS.COM

by Gabrielle Wincherhern
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
THEY/SHE
gabrielle.wincherhern@uconn.edu

Have you ever had someone say to you, “We’re on the same wavelength!” or something along those lines (I haven’t, personally, because my thoughts are just so incredibly unique and out there that no one could ever possibly be on my wavelength, but I imagine you’re not like me)? Turns out, there’s a neurological component to this saying.

Most neuroscience research is conducted on individuals, so a lot of the time when we think of brain activity, we think of it as an individual process. This makes sense, especially if two people are in different environments: if one night I’m working while my friend is out partying, it

seems pretty obvious that our brains are going to be doing different things. But what if instead of my friend (Jordan) leaving me alone in my suffering, we were sitting together and talking? If we were in the same place, at the same time, having the same conversation and experience, would our brains still be doing their own separate things?

Neural coupling, also known as “mirroring,” is when people interacting with each other display matching brain activity. This happens in a variety of contexts, like between a teacher and a student, between someone telling a story and someone listening or between a musician and their audience — but no matter what the exact situation is, the common thread is that people are communicating

and connecting, and the neuronal patterns in their brain are reflecting that connection. In other words, they are literally synced up. And the more synchronized the patterns are, the more effective the connection seems to be.

This was demonstrated in a 2010 study where participants were placed into a Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine to record their brain activity and assigned the role of either a speaker or a listener. Speakers verbally told a story using either Russian or English, while listeners (who only understood English) heard a recording of a speaker’s story. When hearing a story in English, a listener’s brain activity more or less mirrored the speaker’s brain activity (although there were some time delays, prob-

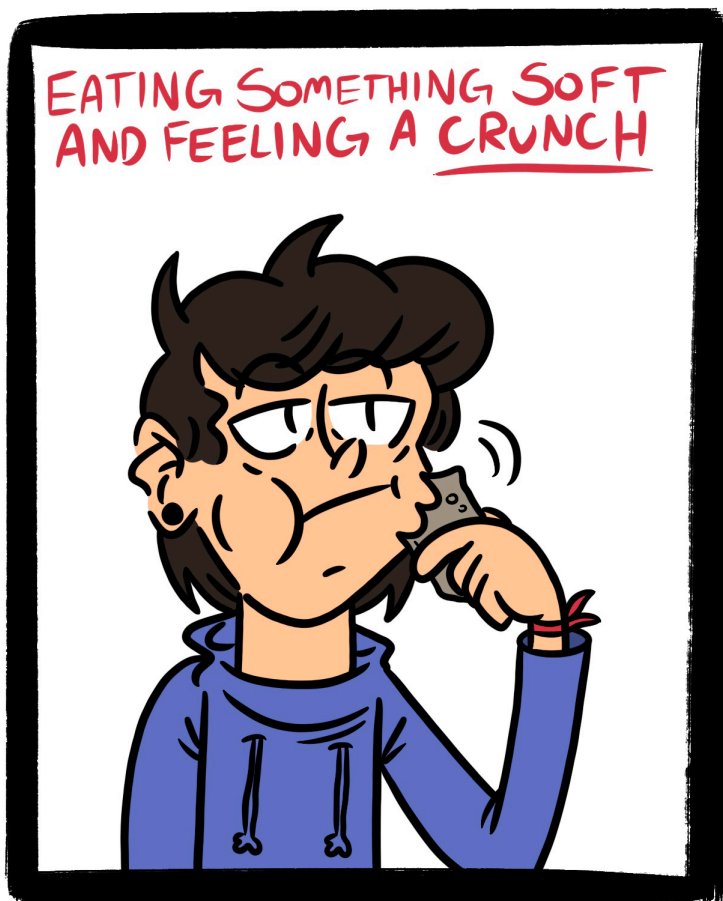
ably to account for processing and comprehension time). But overall, the more closely the patterns were mirrored, the more engaged listeners were, and the better listeners understood the story.

Neural coupling and the strength of it goes beyond storytelling; it applies to social contexts of every kind. In a 2019 study, participants were shown videos of a violinist performing. The more participants enjoyed the music, the more closely their brain activity matched the violinist’s. And a 2020 study found that teammates who show stronger inter-brain synchrony also perform better as a team.

But this phenomenon isn’t limited to human interactions, or even just interactions between members of the same species. A 2024 study

found that dogs and humans also display neural coupling in certain brain regions during interactions like petting and eye contact. Additionally, dogs with Shank3 mutations (which seem to be the dog version of autism), do not exhibit as much neural coupling during these interactions, further suggesting that neural coupling is a marker for successful social connection.

So whenever you’re connecting with someone, your brains are copying each other. Brain-wise, imitation really does seem to be the sincerest form of flattery. And in that event, thank you, because by reading my article and my thoughts, your brain waves are (hopefully) matching mine. That’s right, this was all just a really elaborate ruse to get you to connect with me. See you all next week!



comic by connor szrejna, staff artist



Opinion

The Daily Campus

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Karla Perez EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Tomas Hinckley..... OPINION EDITOR

Patrick Minnerly.. ASSOCIATE OPINION EDITOR

Gianna Cassino..... WEEKLY COLUMNIST

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed by individual writers in the opinion section do not reflect the views and opinions of The Daily Campus or other staff members. Only articles labeled "Editorial" are the official opinions of The Daily Campus.



COMIC BY COLBI LORANGER, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

'Wuthering Heights' WAS NEVER A ROMANCE

by Tamara Segal

STAFF WRITER
SHE/HER/HERS
tamara.segal@uconn.edu

When my friend told me that a new film adaptation was to be made of the 1847 novel "Wuthering Heights" by Emily Brontë, suffice to say the English major in me was beside herself. But as I learned more about the nature of this remake, I grew increasingly wary. Much has been debated on the Internet about such issues as the casting of big-name actors Margot Robbie and Jacob Elordi, the removal of racial identity from the story and even the significance of the quotation marks that surround the title. Yet there is one more thing that worries me about the upcoming film: the way it wrongfully portrays the story as a romance.

The marketing for the film has painted the relationship between the two main characters, Catherine and Heathcliff, as the pinnacle of yearning, unruly love and passion left to run loose. The official trailer claims in big, bold letters that the film is "inspired by the greatest love story of all time." It appropriates the quote "Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same." The film is even set to release the day before Valentine's Day. Regardless of any nuance the film eventually attempts to portray in the relationship, the way it has been advertised has already guided its reception.

Yet "Wuthering Heights" is not a romance at all. Rather, it is a work that exposes the worst of human

tendencies: violence, hatred and all-consuming lust and attachment. Undoubtedly the most memorable aspect of the plot is the rocky relationship between the adopted siblings Catherine and Heathcliff, which is so tumultuous that it literally kills Catherine. Despite their genuine love for each other, their relationship should not be mistaken, and definitely not paraded as any sort of ideal.

Consider the reality of their love from the original work: Catherine gives herself up entirely, passionately professing "I am Heathcliff." After Catherine's untimely death – which, again, was caused by the stress of her love affair – Heathcliff cries out in a similar vein, "You said I killed you – haunt me then... I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!" Then, he takes violent, grief-ridden revenge on the entire family Catherine had married into – a spectacle that spans half the book. The story ends by saying that the ghosts of the two can sometimes be seen roaming the moors, a sign that even in death they do not rest.

The Gothic nature of the novel further solidifies the dysfunction of their relationship. The mysterious and medieval abode, the presence of supernatural beings from the very beginning and the stormy, windy and wuthering atmosphere are all key tropes of the Gothic genre. It is clear that Catherine and Heathcliff embody the final and most notable trope: the damsel in distress who is held captive, literally and or figuratively, by the

Byronic hero, a morally slant character prone to fits of passion and insanity.

Therefore, the framing of the story as simply a passionate romance is mistaken and reckless. It's not just insulting to me as a Brontë enthusiast who appreciates the original subject matter; it's also true that with this remake, the warning of the peril of toxic love is being overwritten, and the violence within either discarded or romanticized. In our age, with increasing understanding and awareness of dangerous relationship dynamics, one would hope that we would honor the novel that has been exploring those themes since the 19th century. To neglect that aspect is to disrupt the legacy of the novel that taught us how not to love.

Now, of course, adapting any classic novel is a big undertaking. After all, to turn "Wuthering Heights" into a blockbuster movie is to reestablish the story's legacy. The director Emerald Fennell herself said the film is based on "a version [she] remembered reading, which isn't quite real." While that's not inherently a bad thing, it becomes one when it entails rewriting the novel's major themes which are of such great social importance.

Simply put, if Fennell wanted to tell another story, she could have just done that. Instead, the classic is being buried beneath this unbecoming adaptation. As far as I can tell, this film will be one which glorifies the kind of love that destroys us and corrupts the true meaning of a classic novel.

ILLUSTRATION BY ESHITHA RAO, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Is 3D Printing Good Now?

by Sam Garifalos

CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
bnw25003@uconn.edu

For years, 3D printing has been quietly growing in popularity among engineers, tinkerers and artists. From its beginning in the late 1980s in the form of fairly unreliable resin-based SLA printers, to the surge in public consciousness in the 2010s with the rise of more popular and user-friendly models which first truly brought 3D printing to the consumer level, the concept has long existed in the periphery of technology culture as a promising but poorly-understood idea. For as long as the technology has existed, though, 3D printers have had the reputation of being temperamental machines that take up more time and effort than they return in value to the user. This reputation is not unearned. Most printers throughout the 2010s, especially those with quality and pricing aimed towards consumers, were extremely unreliable, with a tendency towards frequent print failures, technical glitches, component wear and "plastic spaghetti."

More recently, though, a new generation of consistent, cheap and high-quality 3D printers has begun to gain attention and has begun to beg the question, "Is 3D printing good now?"

To understand what sets these new printers apart from their less reliable predecessors, it is first helpful to have a basic understanding of how 3D printers work and how previous generations often failed to work. The main idea behind 3D printing is the creation of three-dimensional objects by printing layers of certain materials on top of each other to create the desired shape. There are several methods for this, but the most popular is FDM, where a string of plastic material called filament is pushed through a heated nozzle where it is melted and then deposited onto a build plate. The heated nozzle draws these layers repeatedly until the specified shape is achieved. This process, though conceptually simple, proved difficult to perfect for older printers. Complex factors like structural vibrations, material quality, filament flow rate and others contributed to these difficul-

ties and often necessitated hours of tinkering and experimenting to get a printer to produce a workable result. These complicating factors were made worse by the fact that many of these consumer grade printers were manufactured with cheap materials and often had hardware and software defects from poor quality control. These difficulty factors were the result of an effort to bring down production cost to a level that consumers could afford and combined to produce an experience that dissuaded new users from delving further into the hobby and exploring the full range of capabilities these devices had to offer. In fact, I was one of those users. I got my first 3D printer when I was around 12 years old, and though I was eventually able to print some fun models and projects, the overall experience filled with technical issues and print failures caused me to abandon the hobby until recently.

With few exceptions, these technical issues seemed as much an inherent part of the 3D printing experience as any other. That was until the recent rise of Shenzhen's Bam-

bu Lab and the 2022 release of their X1 series. These printers quickly gained massive popularity in the 3D printing community for their high-quality construction, ease of use and printing consistency at a price point below any previous printer of comparable specs. Many of the seemingly insurmountable limitations that plagued previous printers were no longer present in Bambu's new suite of devices, with fine-tuned and intuitive software and tight quality control serving to nearly eliminate them from the printing experience. Beyond this, they achieved something previously considered near impossible, bringing 3D printing into the mainstream. Bambu had created an experience seamless and intuitive enough that everyday people who didn't consider themselves enthusiasts like users of the past could feel comfortable and confident enough to take up 3D printing. But Bambu didn't stop there. From 2022 onward, they continued releasing new printers with different capabilities at price ranges, filling market gaps. Through all this, though, they maintained their

main advantage of consistent and seamless printing. This trend of increasingly cheap and user-friendly printers came to a head with their release of the A1 series of printers. These entry level printers looked to be an easy and cheap entry point for new and aspiring users and succeeded massively.

This new generation of high-quality printers has created a perfect environment for anyone looking to get into 3D printing, and having recently acquired a printer myself, I can confidently recommend taking advantage of it. The best part is that you don't even need to buy a printer yourself to experience all the world of 3D printing has to offer! The Storrs campus has printers available in makerspaces that are free for students to use. Innovation Zone in Werth, Innovate Labs in the business building and Maker Studio in the library are open to all students regardless of major. IShop in Castleman is available to students in the College of Engineering. Now is a great time to explore the opportunities of additive manufacturing, so my advice: Get printing!

Opinion

Photo of the Day |



The semester is in full swing in Storrs, Conn. on Feb. 3, 2026. Students studied in the Connecticut Hall lounge. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Scroll, Epstein, Scroll: Who controls the narrative

by Alex Trigo
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
vog24003@uconn.edu

The release of the Jeffery Epstein documents should have detonated the socio-political sphere.

When stories like this break, we like to believe the significance will speak for itself; that the scale of the crime, the power of the people involved or the sheer volume of evidence will force sustained attention. We assume that some truths are simply too big to ignore. The Epstein case proves that assumption wrong.

In a media environment that claims to prioritize transparency and honesty, it would be reasonable to assume that the significance of this case alone would be enough for lasting discourse and scrutiny. Instead, the Epstein investigation has unfolded into fragments, with documents released and withdrawn, names circulating without context and memes spreading across the internet. The public has encountered Epstein less as a systemic crime than as a recurring reference; endlessly resurfacing but increasingly unserious. This isn't because the story lacks importance. It's because importance no longer determines what survives

in public consciousness due to the way social media is designed.

Over the past decade, social media has replaced traditional journalism as the primary way many people encounter news, especially younger generations. Information no longer arrives through a broadcast or front-page headline — it arrives through short-form content and screenshots. News is no longer something we sit with in silence. It's something we swipe away, often without processing what we've just seen.

This shift matters because these platforms do not merely transmit information. They design and deploy algorithms to keep audiences engaged. These systems determine what is given exposure and what ideas will circulate long enough to register as meaningful. These decisions are rarely deemed political. Instead, they are justified through language about safety, community standards, or harm reduction.

The question is not simply how the Epstein story has been discussed, but who has the power to shape the conditions of that discussion. Narrative control in the digital public sphere is concentrated in the hands of a few platforms with massive audiences. Meta's Facebook and Instagram, Elon Musk's X and

TikTok all present themselves as neutral hosts for expression. However, their policies, algorithms and moderation practices all function as a form of soft governance over public attention.

Take, for example, the wave of account removals Meta implemented last year. These bans targeted more than fifty organizations providing abortion advice, reproductive health information and queer support around the world, even in places where abortion is legal and their work is entirely lawful. Campaigners tracking these takedowns called it one of the largest waves of censorship in years, and the reasons given were often vague policy violations.

Another instance comes from a 2023 Human Rights Watch report on Meta's handling of content related to Palestine on Instagram and Facebook. After reviewing over 1,000 cases of content takedown, HRW found that nearly all the censored posts were peaceful expressions of support for Palestine or critical commentary about human rights abuses.

These are not glitches or bugs in their code. Peaceful political expression has been silenced under standards that have never been clearly explained, while other

types of content, oftentimes harmful, continue to spread freely. Ideas like white supremacy, sexism and violence are rampant on many of these platforms. The result is not just the absence of certain views, but the reshaping of the public conversation.

Now consider how this dynamic played out around the Epstein case. On TikTok, for example, attempts to share direct messages containing the word "Epstein" were blocked with automated warnings claiming guideline violations. Meanwhile, ironic references and meme-ified takes on Epstein are proliferating on the platform.

Social media sites have not needed to ban conversations about Epstein outright; they only needed to introduce friction for serious discourse. Here, silence functions as control. Restricting earnest conversation while allowing memes and irony to dominate the space doesn't make the problem mysteriously vanish.

The Epstein case is not a joke. It's not bizarre internet lore. It's not a collection of conspiracy theories. It is a record of sustained sexual violence enabled by wealth, power and institutional failure. It implicates systems that still exist and people who still hold massive influ-

ence. Treating it seriously requires sustained attention, clear language, and for people to actually care. Public pressure for accountability is step one — exactly the thing that platforms are trying to prevent.

So why silence critical discussion while amplifying jokes? Why does seriousness disappear while irony thrives? Why does a case involving mass sexual abuse and human trafficking circulate most easily as a meme? These are not questions with simple answers, but they are questions worth keeping in mind when scrolling.

Platforms do not need to dictate what users think. They only need to shape what they are most likely to see. When critical conversations are made harder to access and unserious content is rewarded, it sends a message about what kinds of attention are acceptable. The result is a public that is informed just enough to recognize the name, but not enough to stay angry.

That should make us furious. If the most disturbing story of our generation can be flattened into jokes, then no issue is immune. The question is no longer what we are being shown. It's what we are being trained to scroll past, and why.

X-Men and the allegation of queerbaiting

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

The problem of queerbaiting in media is prevalent. Oftentimes, media features an especially close "friendship" between two people of the same gender, including jokes recognizing the implied homoeroticism but never making them explicitly queer. Whether it's due to a lack of well-done representation of queer relationships, or a genuine intention on the part of the creators to avoid losing the audience made up of bigots, there is a tendency for these friendships to be interpreted as queer, despite the lack of overt admittance that the relationship is romantic. While some people feel upset at instances such as those, some people don't mind or even prefer those types of relationship representation (like me). That isn't to say overt queer relationships should be removed from media. At this point, I've

found better representation in those considered queerbaiting, than in those where the queerness is overt, but that doesn't erase the importance of openly queer characters. When the characters are approached as neither straight nor gay, their dynamics, love and personality are the focus, allowing for more nuanced and interesting characters. All of the expectations and societal norms that surround romantic relationships can be tossed aside, allowing for what makes the most sense for the characters and their dynamic to take the wheel.

The X-Men films are a great way to explore the issue of queerbaiting. The subject matter of the films is focused on combatting bigotry and expressing pride in your identity, despite what prejudice others may hold. While the two most commonly shipped main characters in the films, Charles (Professor X) and Erik (Magneto), are not canonically queer, there is hard-

to-ignore chemistry between the pair. While there is explicit love, admiration and connection established, it's never stated as being romantic. This is not surprising, given the Marvel franchise is far from independent filmmaking and wants to maintain its popularity. By implying a queer relationship or creating one that queer audience members can relate to, they are playing both sides, appealing to queer audiences who yearn for proper representation without pushing away viewers that are opposed to explicitly queer characters.

The intention behind queerbaiting, as detailed above, is less than admirable. Despite this fact, I still find that relationships that are generally classified as queerbaiting are more meaningful. This is not because of the intention of the creators, but by removing the boundaries enforced by certain labels, love can be shown in new and distinct ways. This is apparent

in the X-Men films, primarily in "X-Men: First Class" where Charles and Erik first meet and work together for a large portion of the film (unlike the many where they're on opposing "sides"). It's made clear immediately that the two share a special bond and despite some crucial differences leaving them with opposing methods, neither wants to hurt the other. This is made apparent in the notorious beach scene where Erik unintentionally deflects a bullet into Charles' back, resulting in him being paralyzed from the waist down. Erik holds Charles and states explicitly that the last thing he wanted was for them to fight. Both characters are very well-developed individually, and when brought together and viewed as a duo, their dynamic works even better. Audiences can relate to the depth of the characters as well as how they love and care for one another, despite their differences. These characters placed in a story that

revolves around fighting prejudice and being proud of who you are makes for a strong draw to queer audiences.

I have little interest in arguing that Charles and Erik are, or should be, romantically involved (they are). I understand why some are, but what I think is most intriguing about the characters and their dynamic is the love they share. While the intention of leaving that love ambiguous is not great, the result is. It allows for numerous interpretations, letting people of all walks of life relate to and feel seen by the characters, queer or not. While it would be nice to have the comfort and security of seeing such well-known characters represented as explicitly queer, pride is at the forefront of the X-Men films, and it would be silly to imply that the lack of an explicitly queer character takes away from the message so crucial to and present in the films.

THE HONOR ROLL: ARIZONA, MICHIGAN ARE CLEARLY THE BEST TEAMS

by Sam Calhoun

STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
samuel.calhoun@uconn.edu

February is here, and résumés need polishing. That starts with a clash between the two best teams in the Big East, as well as conference play heating up. Upsets and rivalries occurred all weekend long, so where do things stand right now? Check out the Honor Roll below.

Arizona (22-0, 9-0 Big 12) remained at No. 1 after a dominant second half at arch-rival Arizona State. The Wildcats host Oklahoma State on Saturday at 4 p.m. on ESPN.

Michigan (21-1, 11-1 Big Ten) stayed at No. 2 after following the Nebraska win with another top-10 win at Michigan State, followed by a sweep of Penn State. The Wolverines visit arch-rival Ohio State on Sunday at 1 p.m. on CBS.

Duke (21-1, 10-0 ACC) stayed at No. 3 after leading wire-to-wire against Boston College on Tuesday. College GameDay comes to town as the Blue Devils visit arch-rival No. 16 North Carolina on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. on ESPN.

UConn (22-1, 12-0 Big East) remained at No. 4 after back-to-back dominant offensive efforts against Creighton and Xavier. The Huskies ride an 18-game winning streak at No. 22 St. John's at 8 p.m. on FOX.

Illinois (20-3, 11-1 Big Ten) stayed at No. 5 after continuing its hot streak with wins at Nebraska and at home against rival Northwestern. The Fighting Illini have a massive one, visiting No. 13 Michigan State on Saturday at 8 p.m. on FOX.

Iowa State (20-2, 7-2 Big 12) moved up to No. 6 after dominant wins over Colorado and

Kansas State. The Cyclones host Baylor on Saturday at 2 p.m. on ESPN.

Houston (20-2, 8-1 Big 12) moved up to No. 7 after back-to-back blowout home wins over Cincinnati and UCF. The Cougars have a massive test, visiting No. 17 BYU on Saturday at 10:30 p.m. on ESPN.

Kansas (17-5, 7-2 Big 12) moved up to No. 8 after a spotless week with wins over BYU and Texas Tech. The Jayhawks host Utah at the Phog on Saturday at 2:30 p.m. on FOX.

Nebraska (20-2, 9-2 Big Ten) dropped to No. 9 after back-to-back losses to Michigan and Illinois. The Cornhuskers look to bounce back at Rutgers on Saturday at noon on Big Ten Network.

Vanderbilt (19-3, 6-3 SEC) comes in at No. 10 after a narrow escape against Ole Miss on Saturday. The Commodores look to improve their résumé against Oklahoma on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. on SEC Network.

Purdue (18-4, 8-3 Big Ten) moved up to No. 11 after a blowout win at Maryland. The Boilermakers look to build on the momentum at home against Oregon on Saturday at 1 p.m. on CBS.

Gonzaga (22-2, 10-1 WCC) dropped to No. 12 after an embarrassing loss at Portland. The Bulldogs look to bounce back at Oregon State on Saturday at 6 p.m. on ESPN+.

Michigan State (19-4, 9-3 Big Ten) dropped to No. 13 after back-to-back losses, including a road loss to Minnesota. The Spartans have a big test on Saturday against No. 5 Illinois at 8 p.m. on FOX.

Florida (16-6, 7-2 SEC) improved to No. 14 after a prolific win over Alabama on Sunday. The Gators visit Texas

A&M on Saturday at 8:30 p.m. on SEC Network.

Virginia (19-3, 8-2 ACC) moved up to No. 15 after a dominant win over Pittsburgh. The Cavaliers host Syracuse on Saturday at noon on ESPN.

North Carolina (18-4, 6-3 ACC) moved up to No. 16 following a dominant win over Syracuse (which almost became an incredible choke). The Tar Heels host arch-rival No. 3 Duke on Saturday at 6:30 p.m. on ESPN.

BYU (17-5, 5-4 Big 12) plummeted to No. 17 as part of a three-game losing streak. The Cougars have a massive test against No. 7 Houston on Saturday at 10:30 p.m. on ESPN.

Texas Tech (16-6, 6-3 Big 12) dropped to No. 18 after back-to-back losses to UCF and Kansas, the latter of which came at home. The Red Raiders aim for a bounce-back win at West Virginia on Sunday at 1 p.m. on FOX.

Arkansas (16-6, 6-3 SEC) fell to No. 19 after a home loss to Kentucky on Saturday. The Razorbacks visit Mississippi State on Saturday at noon on ESPN2.

Clemson (19-4, 9-1 ACC) improved to No. 20 after a close win at Stanford gave the team a three-game winning streak. The Tigers put that on the line at California on Saturday at 8 p.m. on ACC Network.

Louisville (16-6, 6-4 ACC) moved up to No. 21 after back-to-back wins over SMU and Notre Dame. The Cardinals visit Wake Forest on Saturday at noon on ACC Network.

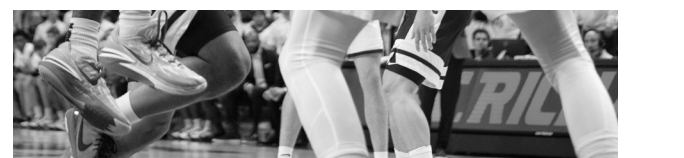
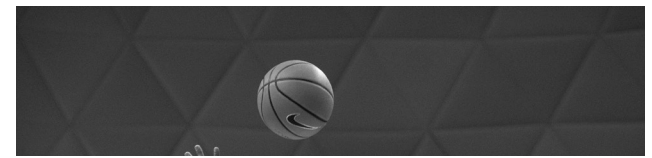
St. John's (17-5, 10-1 Big East) moved up to No. 22 after a road win against DePaul brought the win streak to eight games. The Red Storm host No. 4 UConn at 8 p.m. on FOX.

Tennessee (16-6, 6-3 SEC) improved to No. 23 after back-to-back wins over Auburn and Ole Miss. The Volunteers visit Kentucky on Saturday at 8:30 p.m. on ESPN.

Miami (Ohio) (23-0, 11-0 MAC) moved up to No. 24 after staying unbeaten with a close call at Buffalo on Tuesday night. The RedHawks

take part in the MAC-Sun Belt Challenge against Marshall on Saturday at 4 p.m. on ESPN+.

Saint Louis (22-1, 10-0 A-10) debuts at No. 25 after a win at Davidson brought the win streak to 16 games. The Billikens, who have not lost since November, host La Salle on Saturday at 3 p.m. on ESPN+.



The UConn huskies take on the Arizona wildcats on Nov. 19, 2025 at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. This game was the first top five game on UConn's campus in the last 19 years. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Ava's Angle: Celebrating National Girls and Women in Sports Day at UConn

by Ava Inesta

STAFF WRITER
SHE/HER/HERS
ava.inesta@uconn.edu

National Girls and Women in Sports Day is celebrated annually on the first Wednesday in February, honoring the achievements and highlighting the empowerment of all women and girls involved in sports.

But in a place like Storrs, Conn., the University of Connecticut has been a long-time community of empowering women's sports. Of course, UConn women's basketball takes the crown as one of the most historic programs across the country with 12 national championships. However, UConn has a total of 13 varsity women's sports teams competing and seeing much success at the NCAA Division I level. Behind all these women's sports teams are coaches, support staff and an entire athletic department which has many women in high-level positions.

The athletes are always the center of attention, and while they absolutely deserve the recognition, let's take this opportunity to highlight some of the top tier staff that keeps the athletic program running smoothly at UConn.

Annie Fiorvanti: Deputy Director of Athletics/Senior Woman Administrator

As one of the highest ranked women on the UConn Athletics staff directory following Athletic Director David Benedict, Annie Fiorvanti oversees the overall operations of athletics, providing leadership in many areas to support all student-athletes and staff. She plays a significant role in advancing gender equality and strategic initiatives as Senior Woman Administrator.

Tori Untiet: Senior Associ-

ate Athletic Director for Development.

A former lacrosse athlete and graduate at UConn, Tori Untiet has spent much of her career with her alma-mater. She oversees fundraising efforts that support the athletic department, working closely with donors to secure financial resources for the programs. Building long-term relationships to strengthen the department for growth is a huge part of Unitet's everyday role!

Brenna Sarantides: Assistant Athletic Director for Marketing & Digital Media

At all UConn Athletics sporting events, in-game entertainment is key to the game day experience, and all of those efforts are overseen by Brenna Sarantides. She leads the strategy of UConn's marketing and digital presence,

focusing on brand storytelling and fan engagement. Sarantides connects the Huskies to various audiences through content and campaigns on all platforms!

Dr. Allison Schafer: Director of Sports Medicine and Head Team Physician

A lot of the credit for the success of UConn athletics goes to the staff that keeps all the athletes healthy and strong. Dr. Allison Schafer oversees all the medical care of student-athletes, ensuring their health, safety and readiness to compete. She leads the sport medicine staff and coordinates rehabilitation programs, recovery treatment and everything involving athletes' physical health status.

Ellen Tripp: Associate Director of Athletics/Student-Athlete Success Program (Women's Basketball)

Now this is where the term "student athlete" really flourishes. Ellen Tripp supports the academic success and personal development of all student-athletes through the Student-Athlete Success Program, specifically focusing on women's basketball. She plays a large role in helping athletes balance academic responsibilities, preparing them for success in the classroom beyond the sport.

Baillie Boggs: Assistant Athletic Director for Broadcast & Creative Video Services

More on the in-game entertainment, Baillie Boggs manages the production and creative direction of broadcast and video content for the UConn Athletics department. She oversees storytelling and content through live broadcasts, score-board features and digital video on social me-

dia to showcase all teams and the fan experience at UConn.

Beyond these six staff members, there are so many women that work with the UConn Athletics Department staff, supporting all efforts of sport day in and day out. However, the ones listed above represent a good variety of all of the different areas across the entire athletics department, encapsulating many different career paths in the sports industry.

For female students at UConn who are passionate about working in sports, there are so many opportunities across campus where they can either meet people who have similar interests or secure internships or student jobs to gain hands-on experience. One of the great student organizations at UConn is the Women in Sports Club which strives to create a supporting foundation for young women interested in a career path in sports and make a safe space to create more allies for women involved in the sports industry.

Altogether, UConn continues to set the standard for what it looks like to truly elevate women in sports both on and off the field. From being the home of the dominant UConn women's basketball program to many women holding influential leadership positions on the athletic department's staff, UConn proves that empowering women is not just a celebration once a year, but a daily commitment. UConn stands as a place where women in sports are encouraged to lead and thrive, inspiring the next generation to see sports as a space where women belong and indeed have a seat at the table, encompassing the meaning of National Girls and Women in Sports Day.



The UConn women's basketball team plays Boston College at Mohegan Sun on Oct. 13, 2025. The Huskies won 84-67 in their first exhibition game of the season. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Sports

Photo of the Day | Enjoy the Superbowl and Olympics



UConn men's basketball takes on Villanova at PeoplesBank Arena on Saturday, Jan 24, 2026. Both teams were tied 61-61 at the end of the second half, but the Huskies toppled the Wildcats in overtime, winning 75-67. PHOTO BY ZACH MOLLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

MENS BASKETBALL: NO. 3 UCONN SEEKS REVENGE AT THE GARDEN AGAINST NO. 22 ST. JOHNS

by Matt Dimech
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
rwq24001@uconn.edu

When Big East Media Day wrapped up in October, one thing was clear: everyone's calendars had the dates between the past two outright Big East champions circled with a thick red pen. No need to keep marking X's every day — the wait is over.

No. 3 UConn will travel to meet No. 22 St. John's at Madison Square Garden on Friday, Feb. 5, in a contest that carries major conference implications.

The Huskies (22-1, 12-0) and the Red Storm (17-5, 10-1) were ranked as the preseason No. 4 and No. 5 teams in the country respectively, by the AP Poll. The two programs had a combined 11 players receive Big East Preseason Honors. The reigning conference champions, St. John's, finished first in the Big East Preseason Coaches' Poll, edging out UConn 97-94.

A ball had not yet been bounced off the hardwood, but it was obvious that the path to the Big East title would inevitably run through these two teams.

St. John's got the best of the series last year, completing a season sweep over the Huskies. The Red Storm cruised to an 89-75 victory the last time the two met in The Garden. Connecticut bested the Johnnies the year prior in the 2024 Big East Tournament, ending their season in the penultimate game.

We've already seen Muhammad Ali vs. Joe Frazier, and Rocky Marciano vs. Joe Louis — the next heavyweight bout in the World's Most Famous Arena will not be fought in a ring. It will be fought in the paint, between the two most dominant big men in the Big East.

Tarris Reed Jr. vs. Zuby Ejiyor.

Fighting out of the blue corner, Reed has not missed a shot at the cup since Jan. 27 against Providence. That is 14 straight makes, which includes two perfect performances against Creighton and Xavier.

Reed pulls down the fifth most rebounds in the conference, and was named to the Naismith Hall of Fame's Defensive Player of the Year Watch List, along with teammate Silas Demary Jr.

In the red corner, Ejiyor was named the Preseason Big East Player of the Year in October. The 6-foot-9 forward leads the Johnnies in points, assists, rebounds, blocks and field goal percentage this season. Ejiyor has only failed to score double digits in one game since the start of conference play.

The Huskies had no answers for Ejiyor during last year's meeting at The Garden. Ejiyor scored 18 points, which was tied for the game high. His presence was felt across the stat sheet beyond the scoring. Ejiyor nearly had a double-double, grabbing nine rebounds, while dishing out six assists along with two steals and three blocks.



The UConn men's basketball team beats BYU at TD Garden in Boston, Mass., on Nov. 15, 2025. The Huskies battled until the end, when they won with a final score of 86-84. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Reed has been looking forward to the supersized matchup since the fall.

"It's going to be like a dance, like a tango, you know? I want him at his best. He's going to want me at my best," he said during Big East Media Day.

UConn's offense has ramped up over the past two weeks. The Huskies have scored 80 points in each of their last three games. The recent offensive lift can be credited to the team's improved shot making. UConn has hit double digit three pointers, including 16 against Creighton, over the three-game run.

Demary, Alex Karaban, Jayden Ross and Braylon Mullins are all shooting above a 38% clip from beyond the arc this season. The Huskies have jumped to No. 25 in KenPom's offensive efficiency rating.

"This is who we believe we

can be, who we think we are," UConn head coach Dan Hurley said. "We've got guys that can make shots and firepower."

The Red Storm are on an eight-game winning streak, the second longest in the conference behind UConn's 18. The stretch followed a loss to Providence where St. John's blew an 18-point lead which dropped its record to 9-5. What's changed since then?

Dillon Mitchell.

Mitchell is averaging 11.4 points and 9.3 rebounds since re-entering the starting lineup after the upset loss to the Friars. He started in the Johnnies' first two games but had been coming off the bench for a majority of the regular season. Mitchell is top 10 in the Big East in offensive and defensive rebounding rates.

Both teams are skippered by two of the greatest coaches in

the history of the sport. Hurley and St. John's' Rick Pitino are among the 16 coaches all time to win multiple National Championship, with two apiece.

Neither coach believes that Friday is a true rivalry game between the two top contenders of the conference, despite the magnitude of the upcoming meeting.

"You can't do a rivalry if one team is at the top of the sport... and other programs haven't had any level of success like that. Your rivals are the people that are threatening you," Hurley said.

Pitino agrees with the notion. The 53-year veteran spoke with CBS Sports' Jon Rothstein about the impending clash with the Huskies.

"I don't consider it a rival. I think they're in a class by themselves. I think we're just resurrecting our program, but I don't consider that game more of a rivalry game than Villanova or Georgetown or Providence or anybody else," Pitino said on Inside College Basketball.

Hurley's sentiment does not take away from how competitive Friday's game will be.

"There's certainly a nastiness to when we're going to play St. John's," Hurley said. "There's definitely an intensity and a tension between the programs."

The top dogs of the conference will finally come to blows on Friday, in the pursuit of the Big East regular season title.

Tipoff is scheduled for 7 p.m. and will be televised on Fox.

Track and Field: The Huskies head to Philadelphia for the Sykes and Sabock Challenge

by Alex Klancko
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
lvb24001@uconn.edu

After two track and field school records were broken last week at Boston, the UConn track and field team is headed to University Park, Pa., for the Sykes and Sabock Challenge on Saturday.

UConn will face Temple, Penn State, Binghamton University, West Virginia, Towson University and Cornell among many other teams at the event.

The UConn men's team last attended a track and field meet held by Penn State on Feb. 20, 2016, which was unscored. The most recent scored event the men's team attended at Penn State was Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012, where UConn placed second.

The UConn women's team last attended an event at Penn State on Jan. 12, 2019 which was unscored.

For this year's Challenge, field finals will start at 9:45 a.m. for the women's weighted throw followed by the men's and women's long jump and men's and women's pole vault at 11 a.m.

Other field events happening on Saturday are triple jump, high jump, men's weighted throw and shot put.

The track events finals start at 10:30 a.m. with the mixed 3000m run and mixed one mile run followed by the 60m hurdles and 60m dash preliminaries.

Then, the event finals start at the one mile run, 60m hurdles, 60m dash and 400m dash.

Other track events taking place are the 1000m run, 600m, 800m, 200m, 3000m and 4x400m relay.

Last weekend at the Terrier Classic and Harvard Invitational, the Huskies showed out. Junior Medwin Odamtten broke the men's 60m sprint record and

freshmen Peyton Butler and TJ Jaravaza, sophomore Del Lindsay and junior OJ Singletary broke the school record for the men's 4x400m relay.

Adding to those wins, junior Dar Jankovic won the men's heptathlon, freshman Brooklyn Taylor won the women's long jump, freshman Brooke Struass won the women's 1000m final and senior Rachel Mason won the women's pole vault event after her and Holy Cross athlete Bridget Sachs went to overtime.

Jankovic was awarded Big East Men's Field Athlete of the Week this week for winning the heptathlon.

Some athletes you should look out for are freshman Mason Brosious, who came second in the men's 800m final and sophomore Enaji Muhammed, who came third in the high jump final last weekend.



UConn hosts the UConn Dog Fight Invitational in Storrs, Conn. on April, 4, 2025. The sunny day promoted a big crowd which instilled a strong work ethic from the team. PHOTO BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Others to look out for are junior Calista Mayer, who came second in the 800m final and senior Mia Dansby, who came fourth in the 200m final last weekend.

It will be an exciting show this weekend for the Huskies. Whether it's personal bests or record-breaking performances, it will be fun to see who breaks out next.

Women's Basketball: Huskies host Butler in second-to-last Hartford game of the season

by **Jake McCreven**
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
jpm23012@uconn.edu

The worst thing about playing on the UConn women's basketball team isn't the overwhelming external pressure felt to win (and win convincingly). It isn't the gut-wrenching thought of failing to meet the UConn standard chiseled by the decades of champions before you. And it isn't the overbearing social media presence that some choose to ignore.

It's the fact that you have to eventually leave.

Azzi Fudd's shouldered the pressure of winning. She's met the UConn standard. She's embraced social media. But that doesn't change the fact that she has to leave.

Fudd just came back from her final trip to Chicago as a Husky. She is off the heels of her last rivalry duel with Tennessee. She's already disposed of Notre Dame and USC for (perhaps) the final time.

The beginning of the end, as pessimists would say.

But hey, there still are four home games on the schedule, and over a month until post season play begins in Uncasville. Look on the bright side, will you?

The Huskies (24-0, 13-0) return to Hartford on Saturday to host Butler (9-14, 3-10) in PeoplesBank Arena. It's another chance for Connecticut to iron out its rotational kinks and, more importantly, get healthy.

Freshman forward Blanca

Quiñonez, who's missed the last three games with a re-aggravated shoulder injury, could see the court for the first time this month. The Huskies felt Quiñonez's absence the most the last two games in the second quarter, when they were outscored by Tennessee and DePaul, respectively, failing to break 20 points on both occasions.

Quiñonez's return will put into the place the final rotational cog of the Husky machine, which looks to run nine deep at full strength. The emergence of Allie Ziebell as a consistent perimeter shooter, exemplified by her 34-point showing against Xavier last week, gives Geno Auriemma a third reliable piece to use off the bench. Whether or not Jana El Alfy can sustain her 10-minute per night average in the NCAA Tournament remains to be seen, but the redshirt sophomore has been steady on the glass (0.3 rebounds per minute when on the court) and a defensive anchor on the other end of the court.

Saturday is also an opportunity for the Huskies to shore up on the defensive glass, something that plagued them in the first half against Tennessee last Sunday; Butler ranks 314th in Division I on the offensive glass and 298th in second chance points per game. Look for Sarah Strong and Serah Williams to pull down boards at a frequent clip against a relatively undersized Bulldogs team.

Tip-off is scheduled for noon, with streaming available on FS1.

WOMEN'S SWIM AND DIVE: UCONN PREPARES FOR FINAL TEST AGAINST PROVIDENCE



UConn swimmers compete against Northeastern during a dual meet at the Wolff-Zakim Natatorium on Nov. 9, 2025. The Huskies won the meet 180-120, earning multiple first-place finishes across relay and individual events. PHOTO BY OLIVIA DICKINSON, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by **Jame Badeau**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
PRONOUNS
james.badeau@uconn.edu

The UConn women's swim and dive team will host Providence in its final meet of the season on Saturday afternoon. Saturday is also senior day where UConn will honor its eight seniors, Olivia Denery, Ella Epes, Camilie Gendron, Kiera Liesinger, Alexis Martino, Darah Ostrom, Molly Rogers and Norah Rome.

Providence took the win in their last meet against Holy Cross (142.5-100.5), snapping a five-meet losing streak. UConn will have to compete with Lauren Wagner as she picked up two golds in the 200m IM (2:29.37) and the 200m breaststroke (2:44.68). Watch for UConn freshman Lydia Gonzales (2:09.88) to compete against Wagner in the 200m IM as she took silver in her last outing.

UConn is coming off a dominant win over Seton Hall (159-

80), also winning their sixth consecutive meet. Freshman Erika Pasakinskaite led the Huskies with two medals, a gold in the 100 fly and a silver in the 50 free. The highlight of the meet came in the 500 free, where junior Bridget Davis (5:11.23) narrowly beat Seton Hall's Zeynep Aysoy (5:11.33).

We are just under two weeks away from the Big East Championships, and the Huskies are firing on all cylinders. In diving, the Huskies have been nothing short of clinical. Junior Kate Cooper led the way in diving as UConn swept Seton Hall in all events. If Cooper can keep this up, the Huskies can have a back-to-back Big East champion in the 3m dive.

Over in the 1m dives, Denery has been on fire as she took gold with a score of 256.75, with Ostrom right behind with 243.07.

Both the 200m freestyle and the 1000m freestyle saw gold from UConn by sophomores

Zoey Griffin (1:56.38) and Jordyn Ricciotti (10:39.60).

The combination of veteran leadership from seniors like Denery and Ostrom and the emergence of underclassmen like Griffin and Ricciotti once again suggests that this well-balanced roster is peaking at the perfect time.

Saturday's matchup is a huge test for UConn, as the team gets its chance to assert dominance over Providence. Although the Friars have been struggling, no win is guaranteed. UConn must get on the board early and not look back.

Providence brings depth to the IM events as well as breaststroke events. Freshman Madison Ebanks (2:47.42) recorded her personal best in the 200m breast finishing behind Wagner. UConn must start strong in these events to maintain control of the meet.

The Huskies aren't done after Saturday, as the Big East Championship kicks off in Ocala, Fla., on Feb. 18.



The Huskies vs. Villanova at Gampel Pavilion on Jan. 15. The Huskies won 99-50. PHOTO BY MADISON HENDRICKS, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WOMEN'S HOCKEY: HUSKIES LOOK TO HOLD GROUND IN HOCKEY EAST RACE

by **Thaddeus Sawyer**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
thaddeus.sawyer@uconn.edu

The No. 6 UConn women's hockey team (19-7-2, 12-5-1) will look to rebound from a tough three-week stretch, as they play a pair of Hockey East opponents while looking to remain in striking distance of the No. 1 seed in the Hockey East.

The Huskies will travel to Providence College (9-17-2, 6-10-2) on Friday night to take on the Friars before returning home on Saturday afternoon to face No. 24 Boston College (12-15-1, 10-7-1).

Currently sitting second in the Hockey East standings, a pair of wins this weekend would go a long way towards keeping the Huskies in the race for first place against No. 5 Northeastern University. With three weeks and six games left in the regular season, UConn find themselves 13 points and four wins behind their fellow Huskies. The two teams will face off once more during the final weekend of the regular season, though that game will lose much of its intrigue if Northeastern pulls away before then.

UConn should have a chance to sweep this weekend against a duo of lesser opponents.

Providence currently sits ninth in the Hockey East and dropped a weekend series to UConn in early January. UConn outscored the Friars 9-1 over the two-game series.

While Providence has historically dominated UConn (42-29-12 since 2002), UConn has won eight of the last ten matchups.

The Friars have struggled to



UConn women's hockey team takes on Boston College at the Toscano Family Ice Forum on Saturday, Nov. 8. UConn lost, 2-1. PHOTO BY PARKER MEYERS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

score consistently on the season. Their offense has been shut out six times. Compared to UConn's 77 goals, Providence has scored just 52 times and is 39th in the country in scoring.

While BC is currently in fourth place in the Hockey East, they have struggled against the top of the Hockey East. The Eagles are a com-

bined 2-5 against Northeastern, UConn and Holy Cross. The Huskies split a pair of games with BC in November.

Providence's biggest offensive threat is forward Reichen Kirchmair. The senior leads the team in goals and is the only Friar who has reached 20 points this season.

Kiara Kraft also had a nice performance last weekend,

scoring a goal and assisting two in game one of a two-game sweep of the University of Vermont. That sweep put an end to a seven-game slide for the Friars that started with the January series against UConn.

For BC, forward Ava Thomas leads all Hockey East players in total points and is tied for third in goals. The freshman is among the top 20 in the

country in goals scored. Most recently, she had a goal and three assists across two games against Maine last weekend.

Thomas was named Hockey East Freshman of the Month for January after winning both a Player of the Week and Rookie of the Week award over the course of the month.

Forward Sammy Taber and defender Madelyn Murphy have also crossed the 20-point threshold for the season.

UConn goalie Tia Chan will be tasked with stopping Thomas and company while also playing for a chance at history. The graduate student enters the weekend with 2249 career saves. That leaves her just 23 saves behind Shannon Murphy for the fifth most saves in team history and 60 behind Alexandra Garcia for fourth.

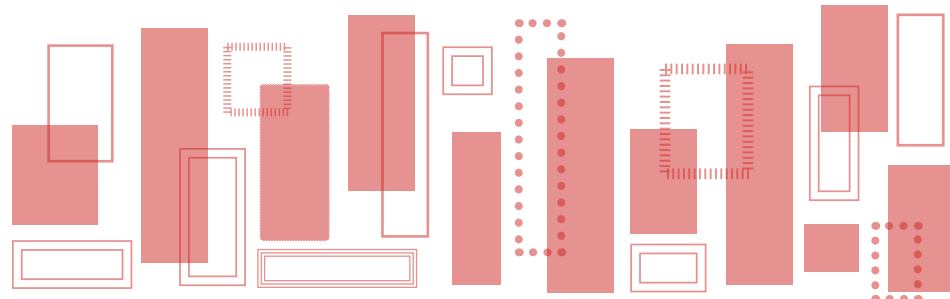
Chan has eclipsed 20 saves in 24 out of 26 games played this season. While the fifth-year Husky will probably have to wait another weekend to pass Garcia, it's almost inevitable that she shoots past Murphy.

The Canada-native is currently third in saves, second in save percentage and second in average goals against in the Hockey East. One of the favorites for Hockey East Goaltender of the Year after winning it a season ago, another pair of shutdown performances would go a long way towards securing a sweep this weekend.

Puck drop for Friday's game is scheduled for 6 p.m. at Schneider Arena in Providence, R.I. Saturday's home game will commence at 3 p.m. at the Toscano Family Ice Forum in Storrs. Husky fans can tune in to both matchups on ESPN+.



Sports



POINT/COUNTERPOINT: WHO WILL WIN THE SUPER BOWL?

by **Thaddeus Sawyer**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
thaddeus.sawyer@uconn.edu
and **Jake Loomis**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
jdl23004@uconn.edu

In this week's rendition of the Point/Counterpoint, Thaddeus Sawyer and Jake Loomis argue who will win the Super Bowl this weekend.

Will it be the former Patriots division rival Sam Darnold and the Seattle Seahawks or the Drake Maye and the New England Patriots Cinderella Story?

Seahawks

Superbowl LX's biggest storyline is the revenge game scenario for resurgent former New York Jets Sam Darnold, who has transformed into a top 10 quarterback.

Prior to this season, such a statement would seem ludicrous. First, it assumes the Seahawks would reach the Superbowl, far from a lock after they missed the playoffs in 2024 in a stacked NFC. Second, Darnold threw away a lot of the goodwill accumulated from a solid year with Minnesota in 2024 when he took nine sacks in the Vikings' first round playoff loss.

However, Darnold's 2025 stats put him among the best in the league.

The eighth-year pro ranked fifth in passing yards and seventh in touchdowns. He also placed seventh in completion percentage and 11th in passer rating while averaging 8.5 yard per passing attempt, showing that the first-year Seahawk is doing more than just accumulating numbers.

Darnold has kept that production up in the postseason. Over three games, he's completed 69.8% of his passes and hasn't been intercepted. Darnold has only taken a combined five sacks over that span.

Much of Darnold's path to the Superbowl is true for Patriots quarterback Drake Maye as well.

There's no doubt that Maye is a better quarterback than Darnold. The MVP finalist threw for the fourth most yards and third most touchdowns in the NFL, while securing the high-

est completion percentage and passer rating in the league at 113.5.

Where the two QBs' routes diverge is in their playoff performance.

Maye has eclipsed a passer rating over 100 just once this postseason. His Wild Card Round passer rating against the Los Angeles Chargers of 86.6 would have placed him in the same echelon as Spencer Rattler and Geno Smith during the regular season.

In the Championship Round against the Denver Broncos, his 58.8 passer rating would have left him below Shedeur Sanders and J.J. McCarthy and just ahead of Brady Cook.

While weather has certainly factored into the sharp decline, Maye has been closer to a liability than a contributor this postseason.

Maye's performance dip has come against three teams who were all top 11 in team sacks in 2025. The Seahawks came in at eight with 47, the same mark as Patriots Divisional Round opponent, the Houston Texans.

After taking more than four sacks on only three occasions during the regular season, Maye has taken five sacks in each playoff game. Like many, Maye struggles when facing increased pressure. One of the Patriots' only losses came in week three against the Pittsburgh Steelers, a game in which Maye took five sacks.

For the Patriots, it isn't as easy as neutralizing one player. The Seahawks had three players reach a team-high seven sacks. Seventeen different players recorded at least a half sack.

If the Patriots offensive line holds up, there's a chance Maye recaptures his regular season form.

If that isn't the case, and Dar-

nold maintains his season-long consistency, a two-score win for a Seahawks team with far more momentum seems likely.

Patriots

Most may label them as underdogs, although this year's revamped Patriots should not be overlooked in this year's Super Bowl.

This year's Patriots do have what it takes to win it all, and it all starts up front with their massive D-Line that anchors the defense. This defense has been spectacular for New England and will need to continue their great play if they want to slow down Seattle's balanced attack.

They will also need to push quarterback Sam Darnold into making some bad throws similar to his time with the Jets, where the Patriots owned him. Jaxson Smith Njigba will also be a feature for New England's defense, as we will get to see Christian Gonzales follow him around all game. This might be one of the best pairings that we have seen between a cornerback and a wide receiver in a long time.

Offensively, New England is led by Drake Maye, and he will be the key to New England winning it all.

Maye has been exceptional in the playoffs, especially when using his legs, and his arm has been on the back burner as he has had shoulder issues following the AFC Championship game. Maye will also need to lean on veteran Stefan Diggs in the red zone and crucial third-down situations.

Regardless of what happens with Seattle, New England is the underdog, but fans should not worry about the squad winning on Sunday, especially with a coach like Mike Vrabel leading the team.



Drake Maye of the New England Patriots holds up the AFC Championship trophy. The Patriots play the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, Feb. 8 in the Superbowl. PHOTO COURTESY OF @PATRIOTS ON INSTAGRAM

Men's Ice Hockey: UConn to face Northeastern in final 2025-2026 in-conference meeting

by **Tyler Pruneau**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
tyler.pruneau@uconn.edu

The No. 12 UConn men's hockey team (15-7-3, 9-5-1) will travel to clash with the Northeastern Huskies (12-12-1, 7-9-0) for the final 2025-2026 in-conference meeting.

Coming into tonight's contest, Connecticut is favored to win. Despite owning an overall 13-15 record, dating back to the 2014-2015 season, they have won the last four games.

In the two programs' previous outings, UConn swept the Northeastern Huskies in a two-game series in November.

In Game 1, two players scored goals to help UConn in their 4-2 victory.

Paving the way, Jake Percival secured a hat-trick. Behind the forward, Ethan Gardula drained a goal.

With 11 and a half minutes remaining in the matchup, Connecticut escaped overtime with two netters by Percival after Northeastern tied the fight 2-2.

By the end of the battle, both teams took 35 shots apiece. While Northeastern's accuracy struggled with a 5.7% shooting percentage, Connecticut finished the night with an 11.4% shooting percentage.

Defensively, UConn tallied 12 blocks, whereas the Hockey East rivals swatted away nine



UConn men's hockey competes against the University of New Hampshire at Toscana Family Ice Forum on Nov. 22, 2025. The Huskies ended the night with a 4-1 win. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

potential goals.

In the net, Tyler Muszelik saved 33 shots for Connecticut, while Lawton Zacher denied 33 shots.

Turning to Game 2, the same story was told. Through three periods and overtime, both squads kept the match close.

With just over 15 minutes left in the showdown, Percival clutched up for UConn once again and cashed in a goal to force extra time.

In overtime, Joey Muldowney scored to give Connecticut a close 4-3 triumph.

Collectively, UConn outshot the Northeastern Huskies 34-19 with a shot percentage of 11.8%. Unlike Game 1, Northeastern flipped the switch and finished with a 15.8% shooting percentage.

Scouting Northeastern

Hockey:

Heading into tonight's bout, Northeastern is coming off a four-game losing streak.

In the team's most recent meeting with the Boston University Terriers, the Huskies fell in an intense 2-1 shootout.

For Northeastern, Dylan Hryckowian kept the pressure on goaltender Mikhail Yegorov, targeting the net five times.

With a little under nine and a half minutes left in the first period, the junior contributed the first points of the contest during a power play. The forward also assisted in Jacob Mathieu's late second-period goal, giving the Huskies a 2-1 lead.

Scouting UConn Hockey: After bringing the CT Ice Cup back to Storrs, Conn., UConn looks to add to its two-game winning streak.

One player to keep an eye on is Muldowney, who could stay hot offensively. Currently, the forward has netted the puck in the squad's last two clashes.

Something worth acknowledging is Connecticut snagging in faceoffs. While facing the Quinnipiac Bobcats in the CT Ice finals, the Bobcats won 37 faceoffs, whereas UConn only grabbed 22.

For those interested, fans can tune into the Hockey East showdown today on ESPN+ with the puck drop scheduled for 7 p.m.

The Big Game: Everything you need to know to watch Super Bowl LX

by **Patrick Boots**
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
patrick.boots@uconn.edu

This Sunday, Feb. 8, the New England Patriots and Seattle Seahawks will face off from Levi's Stadium in the San Francisco Bay for one of the biggest sporting events of the year – the Super Bowl.

We're breaking down every key play, so you're all set to enjoy your Super Sunday.

Where can I tune into the Big Game?

This year, Super Bowl LX will be broadcast on NBC stations. In Connecticut, that may mean you are watching on WVIT Channel 30 Hartford, WWLP Channel 22 Springfield or WNBC Channel 4 New York.

If you're using a TV streaming service or cable app, log in using your provider's credentials (such as Comcast Xfinity or Charter Spectrum) and choose the station you usually watch NBC programming on. If you don't currently subscribe to a TV provider, Peacock and NFL Plus will be webcasting the game on a delay.

On the radio, you can hear the live broadcast on Westwood One Sports affiliates, including WUCS FM 97.9 Windsor Locks-Hartford, WAVZ AM 1300 New Haven and WEEI FM 93.7 Boston. If you subscribe to Sirius XM satellite radio or TuneIn Premium streaming radio, the game will also be available on their NFL channels.

Kick-off is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. ET. The game always starts a little later but make sure to be tuned in by then.

Pre-game and halftime entertainment

The lead-up to the feature presentation kicks off at 12 p.m. with the "Road to the Super Bowl" special, featuring highlights and cinematic moments from this past season.

Starting at 1 p.m., NBC's "Football Night in America" team begins their full pre-game analysis, culminating in the opening ceremony at 6 p.m.

California punk-rock band Green Day will help get the party started with a performance to "commemorate the Super Bowl's six-decade legacy," and 11-time Grammy winner Brandi Carlile will perform "America the Beautiful" as part of the celebration. Singer-songwriter Charlie Puth will sing the national anthem.

"I actually have always wanted to do this, and I recorded a little demo," Puth said in an interview with Rolling Stone. "I've been told Jay-Z loved it, and it got to [NFL Commissioner] Roger Goodell and they all said that I could do it."

After two quarters on the gridiron, Latin hip-hop artist Bad Bunny will headline the halftime show, sponsored by Apple Music. He's taking the stage just a week after winning Album of the Year at the Grammys for "Debi Tirar Más Fotos."

For serious fans, NFL Network

will provide extensive coverage with "NFL Game Day Morning" starting at 9 a.m. with commentary on the most updated news shaping the game.

Commercial breaks

The advertising during the Super Bowl is mythical. Corporations spend top dollar in the hopes they'll inspire viewers to purchase their products and patronize their services — with Big Game ads becoming some of the most memorable moments on television.

Superbowl-Ads.com, a webpage dedicated to archiving and discussing these commercials, has announced some of this year's campaigns will include George Clooney promoting the Grubhub food delivery service, Pepsi stoking the "Cola wars" with polar bears — Coca-Cola's longtime mascots — in a "blind taste test," and Sabrina Carpenter eating Pringles with "Pringleleo," amongst others.

There are also some newcomers to the Super Bowl ad arena, like electrolyte drink mix Liquid IV, featuring K-Pop Demon Hunters' Ejae singing Phil Collins' 1984 hit "Against All Odds," Comcast Xfinity with a "Jurassic Park" throwback featuring Jeff Goldblum and the Ferrero Group, showing its Kinder Bueno and Nutella chocolate confections "blasting off" into outer space.

According to the Associated Press, State Farm has secured the first advertising spot after kick-off, and reported that 30-second national placements sold for as much as \$10 million this year.

There will also be a lot of local advertising, like those from Connecticut businesses, car dealerships and schools like UConn. Don't miss them — special promotions and perks could be waiting just for you!

After the Final Whistle

As with many live sports, it is uncertain when the Big Game will actually end, but it's most likely to finish around 10:30 p.m.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Vince Lombardi trophy ceremony and the "Football Night in America" postgame show, NBC will continue its coverage of the Winter Olympics from Milan, chronicling the women's downhill in Alpine skiing, the men's free skate in the figure skating team event and more. A late local newscast is scheduled for 12 a.m. midnight.

For further analysis after the game, ESPN's Scott van Pelt will host "SportsCenter" and NFL Network will broadcast "Game Day Final" to discuss the results. WFSB Channel 3 will conclude its special "Road to the Championship" Patriots coverage as part of Eyewitness News at 11 p.m.

Enjoy the Game!

That's the game plan. Load up on snacks, round up your crew and settle in for the Big Game — whether you're watching every play, every commercial or just here for the vibes, hopefully our guide helps you be prepared to enjoy this year's Super Bowl!



Bad Bunny and Rauw Alejandro posing for a picture at the Grammys. Bad Bunny won Album of the Year for "Debi Tirar Más Fotos." PHOTO COURTESY OF @GRAMMYS ON INSTAGRAM.