



## SEAHAWKS WIN SUPERBOWL

## GOVERNOR LAMONT ALLOCATES EMERGENCY FUNDS FOR CRITICAL STATE RESPONSE

by Keren Salazar Mercado | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | peu2501@uconn.edu

Gov. Ned Lamont announced a supplemental plan to tap Connecticut's Emergency State Response Reserve, citing federal funding reductions and delays that his office said threaten "essential health and human services supports that residents of Connecticut depend on for their most basic needs."

According to the press release from the Office of Gov. Ned Lamont, the proposal prioritizes tax relief and sustainable funding for essential state services, including a \$500 million rebate that would provide qualifying residents with payments of up to \$400. The plan also seeks to reduce a proposed hospital tax increase and eliminate certain licensing fees to ease financial burdens.

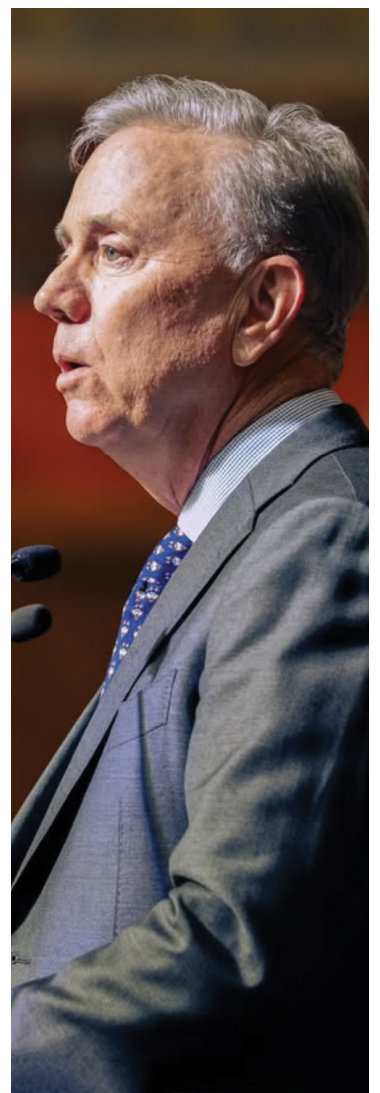
According to The Connecticut Mirror, the current budget keeps investment levels on track for K-12 public schools and public social services, though public universities may need to rely on their own financial reserves due to limited increases in state aid. The Mirror also reported that Lamont's blueprint aims to balance the state's fiscal requirements while staying narrowly within legal spending limits.

According to NBC Connecticut, as the 2026 legislative session opens, Lamont is prioritizing financial relief for residents, including a proposed one-time tax rebate funded by state surplus reserves. The outlet reported that while the executive branch is focused on immediate affordability measures, lawmakers are expected to address broader systemic costs such as property tax burdens, rising utility bills and education funding for local school districts.

In addition to discussing fiscal policy, the legislative session will cover contemporary regulatory issues like data privacy and artificial intelligence, as well as discussions regarding the governor's ongoing emergency expenditure powers. NBC Connecticut reported that lawmakers are weighing how to balance direct financial relief with legislative oversight to maintain the state's long-term fiscal stability.

As the legislative session progresses, the success of Lamont's proposal remains tethered to a delicate bipartisan negotiation. While the Governor's office frames the \$500 million rebate as an essential lifeline against federal austerity, some others in the General Assembly have expressed caution. Lawmakers argue that depleting the Emergency State Response Reserve could leave Connecticut vulnerable should federal funding delays persist in the next fiscal year.

Ahead of the Feb. 5 House session, House Democratic leaders addressed reporters at the Capitol to defend what they described as a short-term



The Governor of Connecticut, Ned Lamont speaking at a press conference. Lamont is the 89th governor of Connecticut. PHOTO COURTESY OF @GOVNEDLAMONT ON INSTAGRAM

funding bridge designed to respond to "unexpected" federal budget cuts, according to Connecticut Network.

Republicans criticized the move as "off-budget spending," a characterization Lamont's team rejected, saying the proposal is "an expenditure, not a revenue grab." The funds were not originally expected to be part of the state budget but are necessary to "lean against" sudden federal cuts, emphasizing the state's responsibility to act quickly when services deemed "critical" are at risk.

Adding that, the administration said it is focused on ensuring Connecticut can "respond in a timely manner" to protect families most directly affected by federal funding instability. It stressed that the reserve is intended to provide a "quick turnaround" and function as "a temporary bridge," not a permanent solution. It also expressed a desire to work "collaboratively" with Republicans, stating that the administration's primary goal is to provide "stability and predictability" for Connecticut residents during an uncertain fiscal period, according to Connecticut Network.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF VEKELS

## Mansfield shelter-in-place lifted, cars cleared after freight train derailment

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

Cleanup operations after a freight train derailed in Mansfield Depot on Thursday have made "considerable progress," town officials said. The shelter-in-place order for the area has been lifted and affected railcars have been removed from the Willimantic River.

"A couple of the cars that could be up righted and put back on the tracks have been put back on the tracks," John Roache, Mansfield's fire chief, said on Saturday. "They're in a cornfield...so they're stabilized."

The derailment happened on Thursday morning near the Eagleville Pond and involved a New England Central Railroad (NECR) consist with 41 cars and two locomotives, according to officials. 10 cars derailed and landed on their sides, six of which were carrying liquid propane fuel. Several cars fell into the Willimantic River.

No injuries were reported and no leaks were detected from the

cars containing propane, according to officials. However, a spill of food-grade grease had to be mitigated.

Stafford Road, also known as Connecticut Route 32, will remain closed to motorists between South Eagleville Road and Route 44 East for the week, Roache said, but residents will have access to their homes.

"While everything is safe and stable right now, there is always the potential of an accident or something happening," he said. "So we ask people to maintain a safe distance away from [the scene]. If you can see the railcars, you're probably a little too close."



Derailed train cars in Mansfield, Conn. A New England Central Railroad (NECR) freight train derailed in Mansfield this past Thursday, and cleanup has taken place since.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF @NBCTLIVE ON INSTAGRAM | FOOTBALL GRAPHIC COURTESY OF @SEAHAWKS


At the briefing, Mansfield Mayor Antonia Moran expressed gratitude for the support provided by local first responders and state agencies through the cleanup.

"It's not a simple project," she said. "People worked long hours in the snow and the cold, and so they needed shelter, they needed food, they needed respite, they needed warmth...The support and, well, just plain help, came from all directions."


The NECR freight train involved in the derailment originated in Palmer, Mass. and was en route southbound toward Willimantic. Officials are investigating to determine a specific cause.

TAKE OUR V-DAY SURVEY!

see the results in our valentines day special edition on Feb. 13!



HERE! →



For more... [dailycampus.com](http://dailycampus.com)  [The\\_DailyCampus](https://www.instagram.com/The_DailyCampus)  [The\\_DailyCampus](https://www.twitter.com/The_DailyCampus)  [The Daily Campus](https://www.facebook.com/The_DailyCampus)

**Daily** OLYMPICS | PAGE 6  
The opening ceremony brings another year of hype to the ice

**Daily** MOVIES | PAGE 7  
You should keep making small films, even if they're awful

**Daily** WBB | PAGE 12  
UConn beats Butler 80-48 without Sarah Strong

WE ARE NOT THE DAILY DIGEST

## News

# Prime Minister Takaichi's party wins a supermajority in Japan's lower house

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's governing party secured a two-thirds supermajority in parliamentary elections, Japanese media reported, citing preliminary results. The landslide victory was due, in large part, to the extraordinary popularity of Japan's first female prime minister, and allows her to pursue a significant conservative shift in Japan's security, immigration and other policies.

Takaichi, in a televised interview with public television network NHK following her victory, said she will emphasize policies meant to make Japan strong and prosperous.

NHK, citing vote count results, said Takaichi's Liberal Democratic Party, or LDP, alone secured 316 seats by early Monday, comfortably surpassing a 261-seat absolute majority in the 465-member lower house, the more powerful of Japan's two-chamber parliament. That marks a record since the party's foundation in 1955 and surpasses the previous record of 300 seats won in 1986 by late Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

With 36 seats won by its new ally, Japan Innovation Party, Takaichi's ruling coalition has won 352 seats.

A smiling Takaichi placed a big red ribbon above each winner's name on a signboard at the LDP's headquarters, as accompanying party executives applauded.

Despite the lack of a majority in the upper house, the huge jump from the preelection share in the superior lower house would allow Takaichi to make progress on a right-wing agenda that aims to boost Japan's economy and military capabilities as tensions grow with China and she tries to nurture ties with the United States.

Takaichi said she would try to gain support from the opposition while firmly pushing forward with her policy goals.

"I will be flexible," she said.

Takaichi is popular, but the LDP, which has ruled Japan for most of the last seven decades, has struggled with funding and religious scandals in recent years. She called Sunday's early election after only three months in office, hoping to turn that around while her popularity is high.

Popular leader

The ultraconservative Takaichi, who took office as Japan's first female leader in October, pledged to "work, work, work," and her style, which is seen as both playful and tough, has resonated with younger fans who say they weren't previously interested in politics.

The opposition, despite the formation of a new centrist alliance and a rising far-right, was too splintered to be a real challenger. The new opposition alli-



Sanae Takaichi, Japan's prime minister and president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), puts pins marking the names of candidates who won lower house elections at the LDP headquarters Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026 in Tokyo. KEISUKE HOSUJIMA/KYODO NEWS VIA AP

ance of LDP's former coalition partner, Buddhist-backed dovish Komeito, and the liberal-leaning Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan, is projected to sink to half of their combined preelection share of 167 seats.

Takaichi was betting with this election that her LDP party, together with its new partner, the JIP, would secure a majority.

Trump in a post on his Truth Social platform Sunday congratulated Takaichi "on a LANDSLIDE Victory in today's very important Vote. She is a highly respected and very popular Leader. Sanae's bold and wise decision to call for an Election paid off big time."

Akihito Iwatake, a 53-year-old office worker, said he welcomed the big win by the LDP because he felt the party went too liberal in the past few years. "With Takaichi shifting things more toward the conservative side, I think that brought this positive result," he said.

Takaichi's policies

The LDP's right-wing partner, JIP leader Hirofumi Yoshimura, has said his party will serve as an "accelerator" for Takaichi's push to conservative policies.

Japan has recently seen far-right populists gain ground, such as the anti-globalist and surging nationalist party Sanseito. Exit polls projected a big gain for Sanseito.

The first major task for Takaichi when the lower house reconvenes in mid-February is to work on a budget bill, delayed by the election, to fund economic measures that address rising costs and sluggish wages.

Takaichi has pledged to revise security and defense policies by December to bolster Japan's offensive military capabilities, lifting a ban on weapons exports and moving further away from the country's postwar pacifist principles.

She has been pushing for tougher policies on foreigners,

anti-espionage and other measures that resonate with a far-right audience, but ones that experts say could undermine civil rights.

Takaichi also wants to increase defense spending in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's pressure for Japan to loosen its purse strings.

She now has time to work on these policies, without an election until 2028.

Divisive policies

Though Takaichi said that she's seeking to win support for policies seen as divisive in Japan, she largely avoided discussing ways to fund soaring military spending, how to fix diplomatic tension with China and other issues.

Despite her rightward shift, Takaichi is expected to maintain good relations with South Korea, given shared worries about threats from North Korea and China. But Seoul would worry about a Japanese attempt to revise

the country's pacifist constitution or to further build up its military because of Japan's wartime past, said Leif-Eric Easley, professor of international studies at Ewha Womans University in Seoul.

In her campaign speeches, Takaichi enthusiastically talked about the need for government spending to fund "crisis management investment and growth," such as measures to strengthen economic security, technology and other industries. Takaichi also seeks to push tougher measures on immigration, including stricter requirements for foreign property owners and a cap on foreign residents.

Sunday's election "underscores a problematic trend in Japanese politics in which political survival takes priority over substantive policy outcomes," said Masato Kamikubo, a Ritsumeikan University politics professor. "Whenever the government attempts necessary but unpopular reforms ... the next election looms."

## 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

**Sunday, February 8, 2026**

Copy Editors: Gabrielle Wincherhern and Jordan Candelario

News Designer: Connor Lafferty

Life Designer: Uzoma Chukwurah

Sports Designer: Isabella Kulawik and Connor Lafferty

Opinion Designer: Connor Lafferty

Photo Producer: Marco Lopez Rodriguez

**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  
**Sam 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](http://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.)**

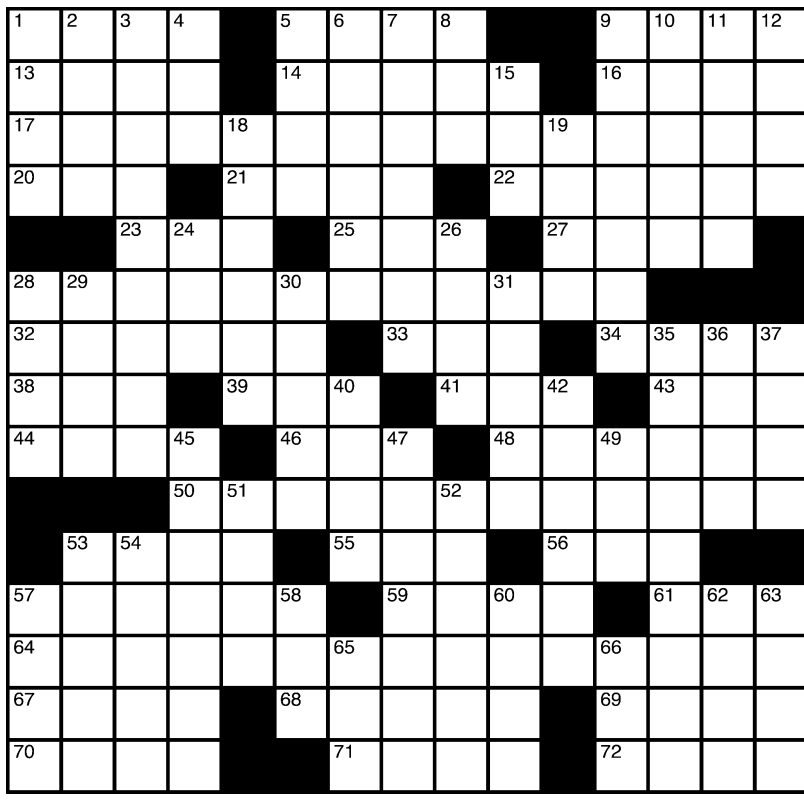
photo@dailycampus.com

**Artists (Meetings at 9 p.m.)**

artists@dailycampus.com

# CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Prepare to be photographed
  - 5 Lobster's pincer
  - 9 Trig subject
  - 13 "Grand" ice cream
  - 14 Buenos \_\_\_\_\_, Argentina
  - 16 Wound-treating plant in ancient Greece and Egypt
  - 17 "Don't forget we want lots of letters!"
  - 20 PC connection port
  - 21 \_\_\_\_\_ of Skye
  - 22 Gabbed on end
  - 23 10-min. NFL periods
  - 25 Buffoon
  - 27 Sesame \_\_\_\_\_ bun
  - 28 Aviation pioneer who said, "It is possible to fly without motors, but not without knowledge and skill"
  - 32 Emphatic confirmation of accomplishment
  - 33 \_\_\_\_\_-mo replay
  - 34 Under the weather
  - 38 "\_\_\_\_\_ Misérables"
  - 39 "That's gross!"
  - 41 Songwriter \_\_\_\_\_-Manuel Miranda
  - 43 Convent resident
  - 44 The Dalai \_\_\_\_\_
  - 46 Have lunch
  - 48 Replaceable turntable part
  - 50 Exchange of wedding vows, e.g.
  - 53 React to ear scratches, perhaps
  - 55 U.K. part
  - 56 Near-failing grade
  - 57 Hats for haute cuisine chefs
  - 59 Gas sealed in glass
  - 61 Rizzo the Muppet, for one
  - 64 "I think that's correct," or what one may say about the ends of 17-, 28-, and 50-Across
  - 67 Fluttered down to the ground
  - 68 Pitcher Ryan who holds the MLB

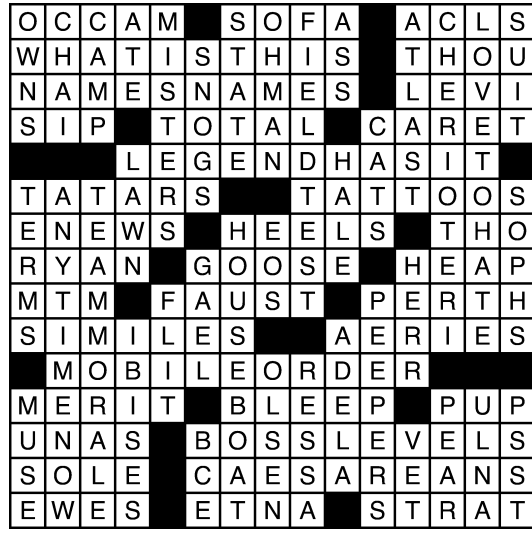


By Dan Capra

2/9/26

- 69 Apex
- 70 Ice Spice songs
- 71 Word underlined in red, maybe
- 72 Fight enders, briefly

**Saturday's Puzzle Solved**

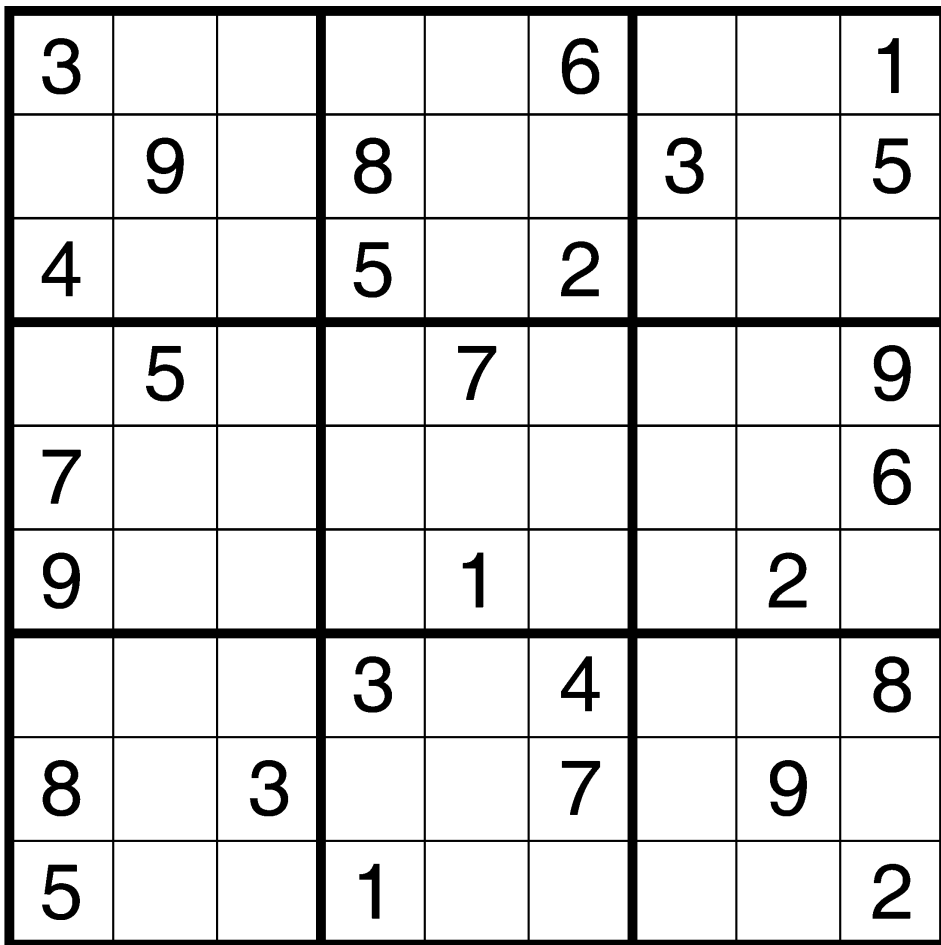


©2026 Tribune Content Agency, LLC

2/9/26

- 35 The Smiths genre
- 36 \_\_\_\_\_ of personality
- 37 Reflex test target
- 40 Suffix with spy or ransom
- 42 May refuse to
- 45 Sum totals
- 47 In a high-pitched, cheap-sounding way
- 49 Poet's before
- 51 Floored
- 52 Factor in family planning
- 53 Bucks
- 54 Provide with gear
- 57 Russian monarch
- 58 Data breach target fig.
- 60 "What a disaster!"
- 62 Nerf darts, e.g.
- 63 Golf pegs
- 65 Nonsense, to a Brit
- 66 Tit for \_\_\_\_\_

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



Solution to Saturday's puzzle

2/9/26

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

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

# SUDOKU

## 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.



Logo by Colbi Loranger | ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# This Week in History: Darling Dior

by Isabella Kulawik  
ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR  
SHE/HER/HERS  
imk24001@uconn.edu

In the wake of the devastation in post-war Europe, countries and people were searching to return to some kind of normalcy. Liberated France was still recovering two years after World War II, and Paris was looking to reclaim its sophisticated image through fashion. This week in history, on Feb. 12, 1947, Christian Dior revolutionized couture fashion with the debut of his collection “The New Look,” bringing the world’s dresses into the present.

Wartime rations and scarcity changed fashion in the 1940s. Gone were the days of corseted opulence during the Victorian

and Edwardian era, along with the luxurious silk bias gowns of the 1930s. All of these styles required large amounts of fabric and skill to manufacture. Instead, sleeker styles became popular; they were often boxier and had shorter hemlines just below the knee, reducing yardage and providing convenience as women entered the workforce.

However, when the war was over, Parisian fashion houses had difficulty breaking out of this austere style — that is, until Dior’s show. The new line was designed to embrace femininity, featuring rounded silhouettes and pleats. In the Vogue article, “Everything You Need to Know About Christian Dior’s New Look Silhouette” by Laird Borrelli-Persson, Dior’s writing from his autobiography is quoted describing his line at the time: “As a result of the war and uniforms, women still looked and dressed like Amazons. But I designed clothes for flower-like women, with rounded shoulders, full feminine busts, and hand-span waists above enormous spreading skirts.”

And “flower-like” they had become. The show was a hit that caused elation and controversy, but most importantly, it reinstated the Parisian Haute-Couture. These pieces were opulent, with skirts of beautiful knife pleats that fell just above the ankle, requiring 25 to 40 yards of fabric.

Some women protested these styles, creating signs with sayings such as, “Mr. Dior. We abhor dresses to the floor,” calling for a return to the shorter wartime styles. Much of this had to do with the practicality of the skirts and reflected the return of women to the home that would come during the 1950s.

Even so, the “New Look” carried lasting effects in today’s world. In fact, Dior’s movement of hyper-feminization is a large reason why women’s clothing often

doesn’t have pockets; and when they do, they are too small to fit anything. From the 17th to the 20th centuries, women’s pockets were large enough to fit a bottle of champagne (it’s actually insane; I love my 18th-century pocket panniers).

Dior was the director of his fashion house from 1947 to 1957, and his style remains timeless. When I saw the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s “Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion” exhibit, there were quite a few of his designs that I was practically drooling over.

All this, however, is to say that fashion is important. Fashion history especially is vital to understanding cultural values and events; it actually allows you to walk in another person’s shoes, which is why it can be frustrating that the subject is so frequently dismissed as unimportant.

The Met Costume Institute runs the Met Gala because it does not receive federal funding for its operations. Perhaps this is connected to the fact that the textile arts have historically been dominated by women. Much of the fine embroidery that requires skill and artistry has been done by unnamed artists, as it is something that isn’t traditionally signed.

Clothing is a status symbol; it’s a form of self-expression that reflects how people live, in an unapologetic and honest way that can’t always be retained from other kinds of primary sources. There’s a reason why England banned tartan fabrics and why nobility took the time to put sumptuary laws in place: to suppress rebellion and maintain social hierarchies.

Fashion is so much more than the fabric in your closet. It’s art, it’s messy and it can be immensely beautiful. So next time you get ready for another day of classes or work, think about how one day your style or clothing will help define an era.



The “Venus” and “Rose Rouge” dresses from House of Dior, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s “Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion.” House of Dior was founded by Christian Dior, who had a big impact on Parisian women’s fashion post-World War II.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISABELLA KULAWIK, ASSOCIATE MANAGING EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS



# Puppet Neverland premieres in feminist fashion

by Maleena Muzio  
ASSOCIATE LIFE EDITOR  
SHE/HER/HERS  
maleena.muzio@uconn.edu

Audiences were immersed into a reimagined Neverland full of whimsy and girl power at the premier of “Darling or a Guided Adventure in Dismantling the Patriarchy” at the Connecticut Repertory Theatre at the University of Connecticut on Friday, Feb. 6.

Blending puppetry and traditional acting together, “Darling” retells the classic story of

fascinatingly leaps from lamp to lamp; Captain Hook is a faceless head and torso and the Lost Boys are three wooden toy ducks.

“What I feel the proudest of are the Lost Boys,” Walker said. “Only because that building process felt the most out of my comfort zone.”

Walker designed all of the puppets in “Darling.” The puppets were operated

Wendy and Peter Pan, only they are a few years older and this

entirely by Allison “Alfi” Free, Alice “Rosie” Grunzke and Amy Liou, all of whom were extremely enthusiastic and interacted with the audience at times.

There is absolutely no dialogue in the show, with the exception of a few grunts and groans from actors, as well as the quacking of the Lost Boys.

Despite no words being said, the message of the show was clear. “The patriarchy is really a part of everything,” Walker said.

One of the most memorable moments of “Darling” was a

scene where Wendy first discovered her shadow, which was depicted as a queen and was much taller than Peter’s shadow, Pan (Mariangelie Vélez). The expression on Wendy’s face when she noticed her shadow was one of awe and amazement — almost as if she saw herself in a new light or recognized her power for the first time.

“I really loved that they had shadows telling part of the story because it’s such a big part of the original story too,” Leo Boss, a sixth-semester entertainment engineering major, said.

Towards the end of the show, a battle with Hook takes place, where he is physically dismantled by Wendy and her shadow, Darling (Ian Rothauer). Hook is a direct representation of the patriarchy and even chuckles to himself when he sees Darling hand Wendy the sword, as opposed to Peter.

“Harley did a really good job of having Wendy take control of her own story,” Solace Barata, a sixth-semester pathobiology and ecology and evolutionary biology major, said.

“Darling” emphasizes rewriting the narrative and a reclamation of power for people who don’t identify as male.

“This idea of working together because we are not going to be able to do anything by ourselves [is a theme and lesson of the show],” Walker said. “When you look at the playbill, truly every name in there in there contributed to making this happen.”

Walker shouted out the director of the show Kate Brehm, as well as Hannah Trobaugh, the technical director of the show. “Darling” is an MFA project for Walker and Trobaugh for UConn’s Puppet Arts program.

“Darling” will be playing at Connecticut Repertory Theatre until Sunday, Feb. 15. UConn students can purchase discounted tickets for the showing on Thursday, Feb. 12.



A performance of Harley Walker’s “Darling or a Guided Adventure in Dismantling the Patriarchy” performed at the Connecticut Repertory Theatre. The show premiered on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @CRT\_UCONN ON INSTAGRAM

time, Wendy is the heroine of the tale.

“I’ve always loved ‘Peter Pan,’ and I wanted to investigate my relationship to the patriarchy — which is a much broader idea — and I needed a container for that,” Harley Walker, the creator and writer of the show, said. “‘Peter Pan’ became the perfect container.”

Puppetry is expanded into a broader genre in “Darling” using shadows, technology and physical objects to portray Walker’s vision.

“It invites the audience into the idea that there’s magic everywhere,” Walker said.

Wendy (Halli Gibson) and Peter (Jiahui Guo) are the only characters in the performance portrayed by live actors, with their shadows being entirely separate characters of their own projected onto the back wall of the set.

Tinkerbell is a mere flickering light, who



A performance of Harley Walker’s “Darling or a Guided Adventure in Dismantling the Patriarchy” performed at the Connecticut Repertory Theatre. The show premiered on Friday, Feb. 6, 2026.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @CRT\_UCONN ON INSTAGRAM



# Life

## OPENING CEREMONY INCITES EXHILARATING BEGINNING FOR 2026 WINTER OLYMPICS

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

On Friday, Feb. 6, the 2026 Winter Olympics made its riveting debut via a galvanizing opening ceremony that took place at the San Siro Stadium in Milan. Over 80,000 people attended the ceremony, while three other opening ceremonies took place concurrently at Livigno, Predazzo and Cortina.

What's fascinating about the opening ceremony was its enthralling collage of events that ranged from speeches to dance performances and concerts, all of which contributed to the phenomenal debut of the 2026 Winter Olympics.

One major event of the ceremony was the lighting of the cauldrons. This was remarkable because not only was it a symbol of the beginning of the Olympics, but for the first time in history, not one, but two cauldrons were lit. One was lit in Milan, while the other was lit in Cortina. Watching the two cauldrons change colors from blue to bright red as the flames contacted them was a nifty experience.

Another notable event was the raising of the Italian flag and the singing of the Italian national anthem. Not only was this event important to the opening ceremony, but it was significant to Italy and its culture. As the Italian flag was brought into the stadium, three lines of people preceded it, with each line wearing a different color that represented the nation's flag. When the Italian

flag was raised, Italian singer Laura Pausini performed a captivating and uplifting rendition of the Italian national anthem.

Besides all of this, the dancing and musical performances were also astonishing highlights of the opening ceremony. The dance performances, including the time travel dance performed by Sabrina Impacciatore, were outstanding events that represented Olympic and Italian culture. Additionally, Andrea Bocelli's performance was remarkably powerful, engaging the audi-

ence to sing along with him.

Another artist that performed was Mariah Carey. As the center stage glowed in gleaming colors of orange, pink and purple, Carey sang "Nel Blu, dipinto de blu" by Domenico Modugno followed by "Nothing is Impossible," a notable song from her most recent album. The performance was beautiful. However, Carey's way of performing the two songs wasn't as enthusiastic or powerful as that of Bocelli.

A final memorable event was the parade of athletes,

where all countries competing in the Olympics gracefully entered the stadium. Some of the countries gained different reactions among the audience. For instance, the Israelis were booed. Concurrently, audience members became very emotional for the Ukrainians.

Aside from reactions, some of the countries had features that made them stand out. Great Britain's flag bearers had scarves designed and knitted by Tom Daley, an Olympic diver. Additionally, some countries are making their

Olympic debut this year, with two being Benin and the United Arab Emirates.

The 2026 Winter Olympics Opening Ceremony was a fun and lively event to watch. Although not the first opening ceremony I have watched, seeing all the different performances that resembled Italian culture was highly intriguing. While I was a little disappointed with Mariah Carey's performance, the other performances were fascinating to watch. As the Olympics begin, I am looking forward to watching and rooting for my favorite athletes!



The 2026 Winter Olympics opening ceremony at the San Siro Stadium in Milan, Italy. The ceremony took place Friday, Feb. 6, with over 80,000 spectators in attendance.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @NBC ON INSTAGRAM

## How habitat fragmentation and climate change impact tropical plants

by Elijah Polance | STAFF WRITER | HE/HIM/THEY/THEM | elijah.polance@uconn.edu

A University of Florida professor visited the University of Connecticut on Thursday, Feb. 5, to discuss the impact of habitat fragmentation and drought on tropical plants.

Emilio Bruna spoke to the UConn community at the Biology/Physics building about his long-term research in the Amazon rainforest as part of the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) department's weekly "Seminar Series," where experts in the field talk about their research.

Before diving into his findings, Bruna had the audience laughing with a series of self-aware jokes comparing Florida to Connecticut, a sign of the lighthearted and engaging lecture style that followed.

Bruna said that fragmented rainforest habitats — which are portions of rainforest that have been downsized to small patches due to human development — typically have lower species diversity and a higher rate of local extinction than continuous forests. However, there is not much information on what specific factors cause this decline in plant species.

Some experts speculate that plant decline in habitat frag-

ments come from having fewer required pollinator and seed dispersal species, reducing reproduction and growth, Bruna said. But others attribute plant struggles to changes in environmental factors because of the habitat's fragmentation itself.

Portions of Bruna's research assess how these factors impact *Heliconia acuminata*, a tropical plant native to South America. But he also wanted to explore how climate change-induced drought affects plants in fragmented rainforest habitats.

"Life seems terrible, especially if you're a fragmented forest," Bruna said. "But it gets worse, and that is that species in tropical landscapes — all landscapes — fragmented tropical landscapes are also dealing with the consequences of changing climates."

The impact of drought on plant species can be unpredictable, sometimes even leading to short-term flourishing, Bruna said. Drought effects can also be delayed, taking time to influence plant growth and even overlap with future drought impacts.

"The plant is going to have grown a certain amount, but you don't necessarily know whether it's because it's a lingering ef-

fect or a new delayed effect," Bruna said. "And not only do you have the effects of the first drought, you've got the subsequent effects layered on top of the effects of the first drought."

Bruna's synergy hypothesis presumed that drought would reduce the growth rate of tropical plants in fragmented habitats more severely than it would for tropical plants in continuous forests.

To test this, Bruna studied over 10 locations near Manaus, Brazil. Six were continuous forests, three were 10-hectare plots of fragmented forest and four were one-hectare plots of fragmented forest. Over time, only the continuous forests exhibited a positive growth rate for the studied plant species in all locations, while most of the fragmented locations had a negative growth rate.

The process of evaluating drought's impact on plant growth, survivability and fertility was less simple. Bruna compiled over 10 years of data, and through complex computational equations, determined a way to discern the consequences of each drought, including their lingering effects. He found that droughts can take

up to 36 months before having an effect on plant growth.

These models also allowed Bruna to predict how — at the current rate of climate change and drought prevalence — these tropical plants might fare over the next few decades, taking into account habitat fragmentation. In both the models with the most and least extreme drought predictions, plants in continuous forest fared much better than those in fragmented forest in the long term.

While his research demonstrated how different environmental changes interact with one another, it also showed that these changes can be unpredictable and difficult to study, Bruna said. He hopes other scientists apply similar studies to different plant species in different climates for a broader understanding of how climate change and habitat fragmentation make it harder for species to survive.

"We are living in a fragmented world whether we like it or not," Bruna said. "So, we need to understand what's happening in fragmented ecosystems."

Margot Gagnon, a graduate student in the EEB program, attends each of the department's "Seminar Series"

events because she is enrolled in the program. Her current focus is on dissections and she liked hearing how these habitat-wide studies differed from her own work, she said.

"I'm always really interested in the logistics, the practical aspects of doing tropical studies," Gagnon said. "Because it's very technology-limiting to do research in the dead center of the Amazon, and I'm really interested in how they navigate that."

There needs to be more research on drought and habitat fragmentation like Bruna's, Dr. David Wagner, an entomology professor at UConn, said. Plants are necessary for everything in nature, so Bruna's research is relevant for all ecologists regardless of their species specialization, he said.

"We don't know why we lose species, so that's a very important problem," Wagner said. "Why do we lose species from cutting up a rainforest? We have small fragments, so we need to understand that problem so we can practice preventing it."

Upcoming events in the "Seminar Series" program can be found on the EEB website. The research and data from Bruna's lab can be found on his website.



# Opinion

## The Daily Campus

### EDITORIAL BOARD:

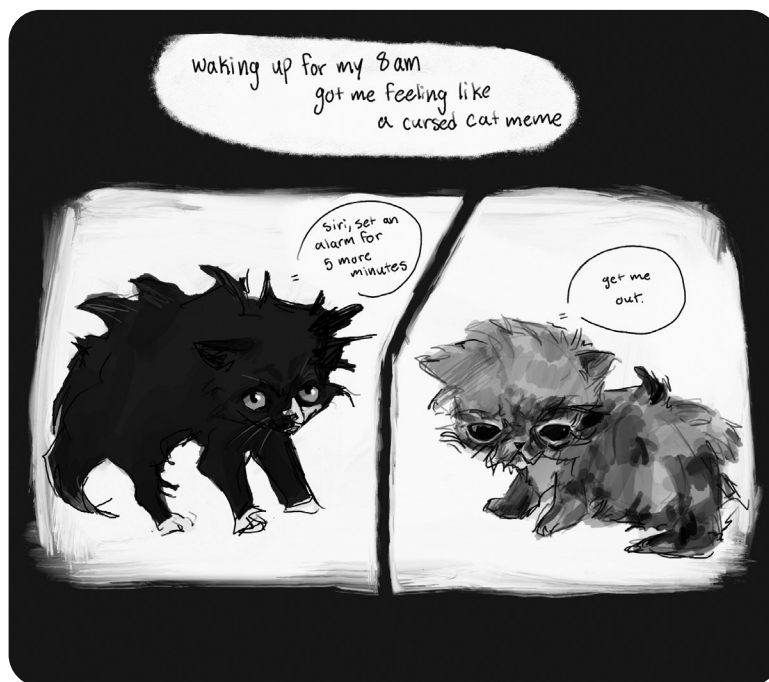
**Karla Perez**..... EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**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 COSETTE ELLIS, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Keep making movies, even if they're awful

by **Alexander Renzulli**  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
HE/HIM/HIS  
alexander.renzulli@uconn.edu

When I was a wee young lad, full of whimsy, wonder and naivety, I received quite possibly the greatest Christmas present a boy in the early 2010s could receive: a beautifully metallic, oddly slippery iPod Touch. Oh, the holy grail of all presents! It was definitely the catalyst of some brainrotting activity, but that did not matter to the mind of a child who had just learned what Angry Birds was. With the rudimentary iPhone, I had access to the world: video games, a camera and text messages. Most importantly to my sister and me, though, we had a little app called iMovie. The backyard became a stage for great, glorious, miscellaneous adventure, as we paired cheesy wipe cuts with whatever song was topping the Billboard Hot 100. We made film after film, music video after music video, as if we were Christopher Nolan cooking up "Interstellar." And we did this all day, every day, until suddenly it seemed like being corny and original was shameful. The iPod was replaced with an iPhone, iMovie with Instagram and creativity with the need to conform.

Truth be told, that iPod has not been touched in years, and "Fireflies" by Owl City is definitely still queued up on iTunes, waiting to be played. I've spent ample time thinking about her though, and her glorious voyage throughout my childhood. So, over the past year, I went digging through the drawers of my house, pulling out ancient camcorders and splicing together movies of all varieties: documentaries of my friends, vlogs of American adventure. I felt as creative as I ever have, and I also found the key to being authentic in this era of computer-generated, monotonous slop.

The filmmaking process is very similar to drawing — something I also find many people give up as they grow into their adolescence. You take a lot of shots, draw a lot of pictures. Most of them are awful, but you tried, and so they are something wonderful and beautiful to look back on. To make a movie means to physically go out and try, and trying is something we are missing as a generation.

The other day in a class I was definitely paying attention in, a peer made a comment preaching, "AI was made to do the boring stuff, now it's just doing the fun stuff." This profound one-liner really had me thinking, which was novel because I really wasn't doing that beforehand. Since

artificial intelligence (AI) came onto the scene not too long ago, it seems society has begun to cut out "the fun stuff" for the simple want of convenience. We forget as humans that the reason we derive fun from activities and ventures is because of the work we put into them. The first film you're going to make is probably going to be rudimentary and rough around the corners, but it certainly will be fun. AI is the antithesis of authenticity, and filmmaking is as human as a medium can be.

It is imperative that people continue to fail and fall, because it is even more imperative that we, as humans, know how to get up. If at 12 years old I judged my home films to such a degree that I quit doing them all completely, I would have robbed myself of simple sheer joy. We cannot have AI steal very accessible joy from us because we are lazy, or because we simply fail to care.

When we fail to care, we fail to live. There is something about old video recording devices, like camcorders and digicams, that seem to bring out the genuine side of any person they are put in front of. Feeling the nostalgic juvenile wonder when presented with a vlog camera, my friends will always blossom open like the spring flowers after winter. Mak-



ILLUSTRATION BY COSETTE ELLIS, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

ing movies with my peers means we can deepen our bonds, and I would take that over the isolation of AI any day.

So go pick up a camera and make yourself a film. Learn to fall in love with trying, failing and being creative all over again. If nothing else, you get some great bloopers out of it.

# UConn's Troubling Leave of Absence Policy: Only you know what's best for you

by **Holly Thompson**  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
SHE/HER/HERS  
hat23015@uconn.edu

Last semester, at the end of October, I temporarily stopped attending UConn due to a medical emergency. I spent two weeks in the hospital, and I wish it could have been more. I needed more time. It was my choice to return so fast, but there were certain parts of UConn's Leave of Absence (LOA) policy that pushed me to go back before I was ready.

I did not take a leave of absence, but I certainly learned what it was. That is why I decided not to take one.

There are several reasons a student may need to take a break from school. Family emergencies, struggles with mental illness and other crises that affect a student's well-being and overall life can lead a student to consider a leave of absence.

A lack of consideration for why a student needs to take time off is a major problem with the LOA policy. For a student to take a leave of absence, they must be in good academic standing and declare what term they will return. These requirements are disadvantageous and unfair to struggling students in several ways.

The correlation between lower grades and mental distress is high, especially for a person with depression in college. Students who are depressed may struggle with a lack of focus during study sessions and lectures, loss of motivation and interest, a slowdown of cognitive processing and sleep disruption, all of which can contribute to lower grades.

Additionally, a study of university students found that a third of participants screened for depression had lower GPAs and were less satisfied with their studies. Another study conducted by Kahoot! found almost 90% of students surveyed said that mental health challenges at least occasionally disrupt their ability to study or complete assignments.

Therefore, I believe that deciding if a student can take a leave of absence based on their academic performance disregards evidence on how mental stress affects grades. This can be caused by a number of circumstances and psychological factors. Wouldn't it be more fair for a student's academic standing to be reevaluated through their re-admission process, instead of by their scholastic performance at their lowest point?

Also, having to declare what

term a student will return when they choose to leave school does not account for the unpredictability of the healing process. The road to healing is not a linear path. The process is often filled with setbacks and obstacles. A student should not be expected to know their return date before they begin the process.

Setting a return date puts pressure on a student to heal at a certain rate. The culture we live in celebrates quick fixes, fast results and the idea that something broken should be repaired as fast as it can be. UConn's LOA website itself explains that students with incomplete course grades are "encouraged to complete all course work as soon as possible" to return to the university the following semester.

I think the LOA policy should recognize that to properly support a student, you must meet

them where they are, not expect them to know what lies ahead. Healing cannot be rushed, as it requires an indeterminate amount of time to address trauma, deal with tricky emotions, learn effective coping skills and integrate these new tactics into our lives.

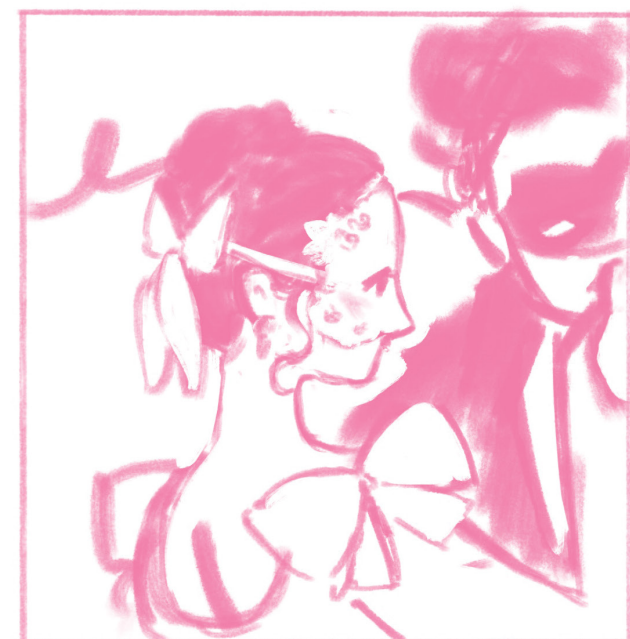
Something else that bothers me about the LOA policy is their rule for students who want to return in the spring semester. When a student takes a leave of absence, they need to reapply to return to UConn, which is stressful in and of itself. However, for a student who wants to return in the spring, they need to apply for readmission by December 1.

What if a student finally starts to feel better on December 2? Under the current policy, they wouldn't be able to return to UConn until the following school year! Taking too much time off

can make it much harder for a student to readjust upon their return, and the more time a student is out of school, the higher the likelihood they'll forget prior knowledge.

The purpose of this article is not to deter students from taking a leave of absence. In fact, taking some time off can help a student devote more time to recovery and self-care and feel more secure upon their return to campus.

I want students to be aware of UConn's policies and procedures regarding LOA because of their expectation for students to be in good academic standing before taking a leave of absence, need for a set return term and reapplication dates which drastically alter the amount of time a student cannot return to school. Take care of yourself and remember to always prioritize your health and well-being above all else.



COMIC BY ALEXA PAPPAS  
STAFF ARTIST

## Opinion

## Photo of the Day | A bright new day for Seattle



The UConn Huskies taking on the St. John's Red Storm at Madison Square Garden in New York City on Feb. 6, 2026. Despite a close game, the Huskies lost 72-81.  
PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

## “We the People” are failing our country

by Grace Donahue

STAFF WRITER  
SHE/HER/HERS  
@grace.donahue@uconn.edu

The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, more commonly known as ICE, has been around since the year 2003. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 led to the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and formed new agencies including that of ICE, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The enforcement of our country's immigration laws which guided ICE and other agencies were guided historically by policies that emphasized prioritization. However, under the guidance of President Donald Trump, these services are now operating in a severely socially destructive manner that is tearing apart the society of our country.

ICE now follows a get-tough philosophy guided by Trump that has resulted in a 75% to 84% increase of people being in detention, holding over 68,000-73,000 people by mid-December 2025, and surpassing the previous peak in August 2019. 2025 marked ICE's deadliest year in over 20 years with 30-32 deaths. By the end of 2025, over more than 100 facilities were being utilized by ICE, a 91% increase in facility usage. 86% of detainees are being held in for-profit, privately-run facilities. With funding provided by the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, there is enough funding to lead to 135,000 detention beds through the end of the year 2029. ICE activities are currently being funded with a \$45 billion budget

from the same bill. ICE's impact goes beyond the detaining of people, with a 1,347% increase in assaults including 66 vehicular attacks. 2026 has just begun and over 70,000 people have already been detained, marking a record high.

It is reported that of the detainees, 74.2% have no criminal convictions while only 5% of these individuals have violent criminal convictions. Overall, with the changes in arrest practices there has been a 2,450% increase in the number of people with no criminal record. Of the people detained, 3,800 children were booked into family detention centers between January and October 2025 with an average daily population of 170 children in ICE detention centers. At least 20 infants were among the children detained in 2025. As of 2025, 170 U.S. citizens have been detained.

America is being ripped apart by these forces that are targeting these large masses of people, many of which have no criminal record. ICE is going into our communities and taking people who should be protected by the Fifth and 14th Amendments of our Constitution which have been put in place to protect any “person” (not just U.S. citizens) within the borders of our country from deprivation of life, liberty or property. While it can be argued that those in ICE detention centers have access to legal proceedings, it is a very difficult and complex process that often requires expert legal representation to secure a bond or prove eligibility for release. This is something many who are in detention centers don't have access to. Resultingly, discretion-

ary releases from detention fell by 87% by the end of November 2025.

To put an end to this, we need to continue to come together as a community and continue to speak up. It is crucial to have more events like the vigil held last Wednesday and honor the victims of ICE and stand up for what “We the people” need as a country. We acknowledge that our country is headed in the wrong direction; only 4% of Democrats, 33% of Republicans and 7% of Independents say America is heading in the right direction, according to a study conducted by the Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics on 18-29-year-olds.

Yet we distrust those who have opposing political views from us, with only 35% believing that someone with an opposing political view still wants what's best for the country. Furthermore, it was found that only 11% of college students would consider themselves highly politically active. While 62% to 71% of students and young adults believe that colleges and universities should remain neutral on political issues.

What's even more alarming is that many simply don't know the basic structure of how our national government was found, according to a survey by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni which determined that few know how our current government even functions. As people of the United States, it is our civic duty to understand what is going on in our country and ensure that our government is protecting the very first words of the Constitution. That “We the People of the

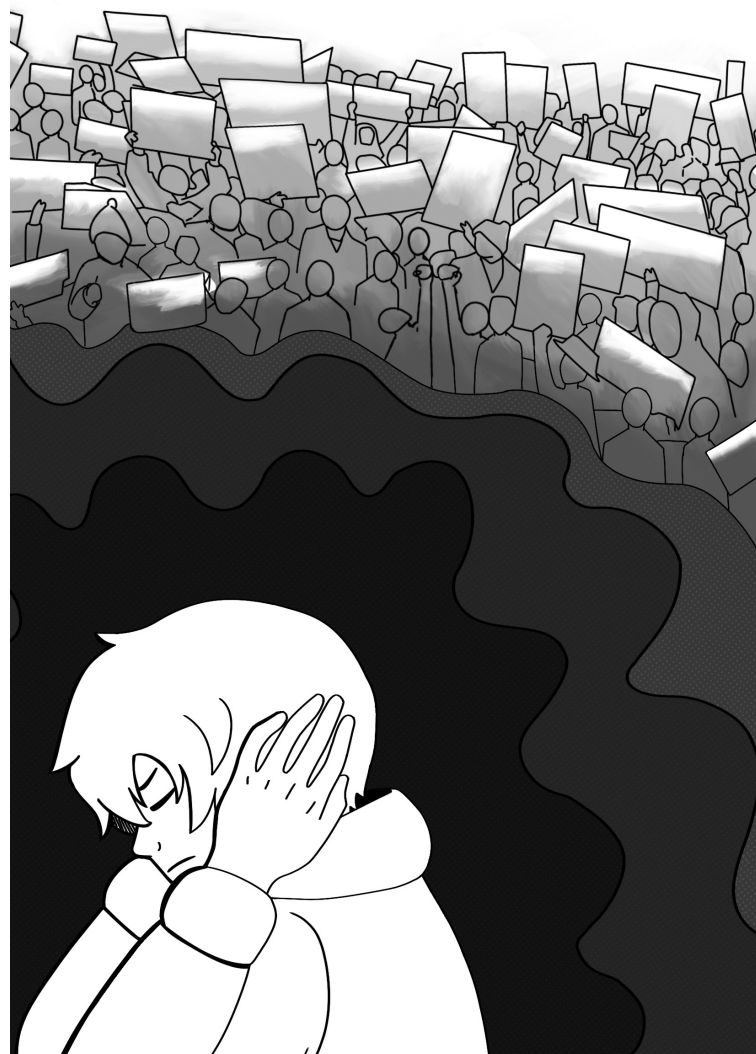


ILLUSTRATION BY RAYFORD BROMLEY, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure Tranquility, provide for the common defence” continue to uphold this standard that our Founding Fathers knew was paramount in maintaining a safe country.

To ensure this is upheld, we all as the American people must be paying attention. Acknowledge the facts, get upset, keep

talking about it. We can't just expect that someone else is going to start or go to the demonstrations, events and protests for us. In not being political, we remain complicit in the violence that is occurring against the American people. We continue to fail what our Founding Fathers stood for and what they fought for with their lives. We fail our country.



COMIC BY ERIKA ECHEGOYEN, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Moneyball Weekly:

## The last go-around of the Los Angeles Kings

by Jack Yadlon  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
HE/HIM/HIS  
ptf24003@uconn.edu

Between 2010 and 2015, only three teams won the Stanley Cup: the Boston Bruins, Chicago Blackhawks and Los Angeles Kings.

Boston had a great run with an old core and have since transitioned well into their new one led by David Pastrnak.

The great Blackhawks dynasty has been torn down for years now, with third-year Connor Bedard leading the tail end of the team's full-on rebuild.

The Kings have also changed most of the roster, but their core sit partially sits around two members of their 2014 team in Anze Kopitar and Drew Doughty.

The Kings' last series win was the 2014 Stanley Cup final. Since then, they've fallen in the first round six times, with the past four years all coming to the Edmonton Oilers.

The Kings' direction has been vague for years now. Doughty's contract is a burden, while Kopitar isn't the player he once was.

The lack of a true star player creates an undefined core. The only definitive member of it is forward Adrian Kempe.

With Kopitar announcing before this year that this will be his final season, the Kings' only option seems to be to bring possibly the greatest King of all time one more shot at glory.

The Olympic roster freeze began last Wednesday, meaning no moves can be made until Feb. 23. With this, a mini trade deadline ensued.

On the other side of the country, one of the league's most dis-

appointing teams, New York Rangers accepted the reality that a retool had become necessary, meaning the movement of older players to bring in younger players. This meant that superstar Artemi Panarin was up for grabs.

With a full no-move clause on Panarin's contract and all the control in his hands, the leverage went to any team that he was willing to be traded to, which would turn out to be Los Angeles.

Due to this leverage, the Kings only gave up their top prospect Liam Greentree and a third-round pick which can be upgraded based on the Kings' playoff performance.

The Kings promptly signed Panarin to a two-year, \$22 million extension, meaning that for the first time in forever the Kings will have a real superstar.

The Kings sit only three points out of the playoffs due to a shallow west. Despite this, the Kings still have major problems. Los Angeles has the third-worst

goals league-wide, with the rest of the bottom eight consistent of only teams who are bottom seven in the overall standings.

Panarin can help with this, but one player will not fix everything.

Teams can still discuss potential moves over the freeze, though nothing can be finalized during this time. It is likely the Kings will begin making calls and start to figure out what to do when the window reopens.

With their franchise icon on the way out and their top prospect gone, the only real direction for the Kings is one last all-in shot at a championship. And with around \$14 million in cap room come deadline day (per Puckpedia), the Kings have room for moves.

The Kings' big offensive issue is down the middle. They've been forced to play Alex Laferriere, a natural winger, at center due to lack of depth with Alex Turcotte out. This is very likely to be their position of interest.

Unfortunately for the Kings,

that just so happens to be the weakest position of the deadline outside of goalies.

The top player remaining on the market is another Ranger in Vincent Trocheck, a veteran center with multiple years of control remaining. Due to the thin market at the position and the years left on his contract, Trocheck will come at a premium, and without Greentree there may not be anything left that the Rangers would want from Los Angeles.

Calgary Flames' Nazem Kadri and Nashville Predators' Steven Stamkos both have cup winning experience but sit on teams out of contention, though both carry undesirable contracts that the Kings would need to take on.

Columbus Blue Jackets' Charlie Coyle and Boone Jenner could also be available, but these would be lower-end options than the Kings need.

Elias Pettersson of Vancouver and Robert Thomas of St Louis could provide a long-term center solution for the Kings should

either waive their full clauses.

Pettersson sits on a sinking Vancouver team that is primed for a full reset and will be likely to try and shed Pettersson's hefty deal. The problem for the Kings is that Pettersson's failure to live up to his contract is a large part of why the Canucks have failed, a potential red flag for L.A.; one that could also slash the price of acquisition.

Robert Thomas is a much more desirable pickup as the lone bright spot in a horrible Blues season. For that reason, St Louis may not even entertain offers for him. The cost of acquisition would be sky-high and potentially too much for the Kings after moving Greentree.

How much the Kings give up comes down to whether they expect a full rebuild or not after Kopitar's departure. With a shaky roster and shakier future, something had to give.

And the Panarin move signifies that general manager Ken Holland has likely determined that sacrifice to be the future.



Members of the Los Angeles Kings, who have not had a series win since the 2014 Stanley Cup final. In recent years, the Kings' roster has changed, contributing to their lackluster performance. PHOTO COURTESY OF @LAKINGS ON INSTAGRAM

## Men's Hockey East Roundup Week 17

by Jack Yadlon  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
HE/HIM/HIS  
ptf24003@uconn.edu

With Olympic hockey set to begin this week, the NHL has entered a three-week roster freeze.

But college hockey continues as the push for the NCAA tournament progresses.

The end of last week featured the UMass Amherst Minutemen against the UMass Lowell River Hawks, a game which the Minutemen took 6-4. Jack Musa's point production has slowed down in recent weeks, but a hat trick and four-point performance could signal a return to his earlier form.

The Beanpot kicked off Monday, with No. 11 Boston College (BC) facing Harvard followed by Boston University (BU) and Northeastern.

Boston College stepped on

the gas early and never let up, scoring three first period goals in what would ultimately end in a 5-1 victory. Bruins' prospect James Hagens scored three points in the victory to send BC back to the Beanpot finals.

The following game was a much more balanced affair, with two teams who had been ranked earlier in the year but have since fallen out of them.

The teams each traded two goals in the first two periods before entering overtime tied at 2-2. With no decision made after the overtime frame, the teams went to the shootout to determine who would see BC the following Monday. Terrier Cole Hutson finished off Northeastern and punched his team's ticket for a chance at the Beanpot title in another battle of Comm Ave.

Merrimack traveled to Stonehill on Tuesday. Justin

Gill and Trevor Hoskin both scored four points in the Warriors' 9-5 barnburner victory.

Friday action began with No. 18 Maine traveling to Boston University for a lone game. Maine led late in the third period by a score of 2-1, but a late Cole Eiserman goal on the powerplay tied things up for the Terriers. In overtime, it was Minnesota draft pick Ryder Ritchie who finished things off for Boston. Despite not holding a lead at any point in the week, the Terriers managed an overtime and shootout win.

No. 7 Providence visited New Hampshire and hosted Vermont during the weekend. Tanner Adams scored four points in game one and Alekski Kivioja the same in game two to contribute to two 6-1 Friar victories. Providence, who struggled early

in the year, continues to dominate and come closer to a guaranteed at-large bid to the NCAA tournament.

Vermont had another 6-1 finish on the weekend in their Friday matchup against Boston College.

Contrary to expectation, that 6-1 finish came in favor of the Catamounts. Ten different Catamounts recorded a point in an unprecedented victory for a team with a sub-.500 record against what would have likely been a top 10 win the following week.

No. 12 UConn travelled to Bentley to face Northeastern in their temporary home following the closure of the legendary Matthews Arena. A stellar performance from goaltender Tyler Muszelik led to a shutout for the Connecticut Huskies in a 2-0 victory.

Of all goalies with 20+

games played, Muszelik's .931 save percentage only trails Michigan State's Trey Augustine and Augustana's Josh Kotai, both of which by very small margins. There is a very good chance that the Richter award comes down to these three, with Augustine and Muszelik having real chances for the Hobey Baker award.

UMass and Lowell played a two-game series for their third matchup since last Sunday. Game one went to the River Hawks by a score of 3-1 in an upset, closing off a five-game winless streak against the Minutemen. The celebration was short-lived, with Amherst taking game two 5-2 to claim the season series.

The final month of the regular season begins today with Northeastern playing Harvard in the Beanpot consolation game, followed by BC and BU for the championship. The Terriers will be defending their title to become two-time reigning champs.

UConn travels to Maine for a two-game series for their first meeting since last year's Hockey East finals. As of Sunday, this is a ranked matchup, though that could change depending on the rankings today due to Maine's Friday loss to BU.

The Beanpot finalists both play home-and-home's this weekend, with BC taking on Merrimack and BU facing New Hampshire in two games each.

Northeastern travels to Rhode Island to see the red-hot Friars in a two-game set to try and right the sinking ship against a very tough opponent.

UMass Lowell also embarks on a road trip out northwest to see the Vermont Catamounts.

The UMass Minutemen will have an off week following three games against their Lowell counterparts.



UMass Amherst Minutemen on the ice. The Minutemen faced the UMass Lowell River Hawks last week, and won 6-4. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UMASSHOCKEY ON INSTAGRAM

## Sports

## Photo of the Day |



Fans watch as the UConn women's hockey team faces off against Boston College on Feb. 7, 2026. The Huskies ultimately won the game 6-2 after being tied at the end of first period. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Members of the UConn track and field team in action. This past Saturday, UConn track and field put out a strong performance at the Sykes & Sabock Challenge in University Park, Pa. PHOTO COURTESY OF @UCONNFTXC

## Track and Field:

### HUSKIES POST STRONG PERFORMANCES ACROSS THE BOARD AT PENN STATE

by **Ryan Lombardi**  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
HE/HIM/HIS  
ryan.lombardi@uconn.edu

UConn track and field turned in a strong performance Saturday at the Sykes and Sabock challenge in University Park, Pa. They faced off against more than a dozen programs and recorded four top 10 marks in the event.

#### Women's Track and Field

The Huskies started off strong on the track with an impressive showing in the 60m hurdles. Three Huskies, freshmen Brooklyn Taylor and Ruby Tillson, along with sophomore Maresa Hense all qualified for the final. Taylor secured the victory with a personal best of 8.40, a mark that ranks fifth all-time in school history.

Freshman Emerson Flaker followed with a standout performance of her own, setting a personal record of 54.77, earning her second in the 400m.

Senior Alyssa Elliott looked dominant in the 600m event, winning her heat by over a second and taking first in the final with a time of 1:34.18. Her performance was the sixth-best in program history.

Hense continued her solid day in the 200m, placing third behind a pair of Cornell runners with a time of 24.67. Senior Mia Dansby also cracked the top ten, finishing seventh in 25.00 flat.

On the field side, junior Ga-

briela DeFelice kicked it off with an eighth-place finish in the weight throw at 15.16m.

In the pole vault, senior Rachel Mason took sixth at 3.75m, with sophomore Piper Lin not far behind in eighth at 3.45m.

Prior to her impressive track victory, Elliott showed off her elite versatility by placing third in the long jump at 5.72. Freshmen Jaidah Garrett and Jalynn Smith rounded out a strong group performance, finishing fourth and sixth, respectively.

Three Huskies finished in the top 10 of the shot put. Senior Sinclair Fryer's 13.81m throw netted her fifth place, and freshmen Brook-lynn Roberts and Ella Karp followed her lead, taking sixth and ninth in the event.

Freshman Kaylee Meyer added another solid result for UConn, finishing fourth in the high jump after clearing 1.72m.

#### Men's Track and Field

On the men's side, the Huskies found early success in the 60m hurdles, where freshmen Mohamed Wahdan and Wyatt Gravier, qualified for the final. Wahdan narrowly missed the win, placing second at 7.96, just a hundredth of a second off first. Gravier followed close behind, finishing fifth with a time of 8.17.

Sophomore Del Lindsay turned in a strong performance of his own in the 400m, placing fifth with a time of 47.94.

Another standout performance came from Gabe Cuffey in the 600m, where he finished third with a time of 1:19.95. The mark puts him at seventh in UConn program history.

Freshman TJ Jarvaza continued the Huskies' success in the sprints, winning the 200m in 21.63, with fellow freshman Peyton Butler battling for a hard fought sixth place in 21.85.

In the field events, graduate student Emi Erekosima delivered a highlight performance after winning the triple jump at 15.23m.

Junior Josh Mooney started off his day finishing 11th in the long jump at 6.77m and went on to place sixth in the pole vault after clearing 4.60m. Close behind him, freshman Wyatt Martin finished eighth in the pole vault at 4.45m.

Freshman Marshall Potter recorded seventh in the weight throw with a mark of 18.87m, while senior Alex Krause placed 12th at 17.24m. Potter also earned fifth place in the shot put, throwing 16.80m.

Finally, in the high jump, sophomore Enaji Muhammad cleared 2.06m, earning him second in the event, while junior Dar Jankovic placed fifth after clearing 1.96m.

Up next, the Huskies return to action with a busy schedule this weekend, competing in Boston on Friday, and Cambridge, Fayetteville and Clemson across Friday and Saturday.

# Women's Hockey:

## CHAN ANCHORS HUSKIES' PERFECT HOCKEY EAST WEEKEND

by Colette Doyle  
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT  
SHE/HER/HERS  
crd23003@uconn.edu

UConn women's hockey team capped off a successful Hockey East weekend with two wins in two days, first beating Providence on the road Friday before carrying the momentum back home against Boston College on Saturday.

On Friday, the Friars controlled the opening faceoff, but the Huskies were the first to strike. Junior forward Livvy Dewar opened scoring with six minutes remaining in the opening period, recording her seventh goal of the season to give UConn an early lead. Providence continued to generate pressure in the first period, but graduate student goaltender Tia Chan stayed strong, stopping nine shots in the opening frame. The Friars outshot the Huskies 9-6 in this period, but due to the Huskies dominant defense, they held onto the lead going into the first intermission.

In the second period, both teams dominated defensively with UConn controlling puck possession for most of the period. The Huskies gained multiple power-play opportunities during this period due to the Friars picking up three penalties during this period. Despite, Providence having less skaters on the ice they kept continued pressure to keep UConn off the scoreboard. The Huskies outshot the Friars 7-6 in this period to preserve their 1-0 lead going into the third period.

Providence got up on the

scoreboard late into the third period with a power play goal to tie the game. The goal forced the game into overtime with the momentum in the hands of the Friars. However, UConn kept their composure going into the overtime. With under two minutes remaining in the five-minute overtime period, senior forward Megan Woodworth scored the game-winning goal for the Huskies.

The Hockey East weekend continued Saturday with a 6-2 victory over Boston College at the Toscano Family Ice Forum. Chan once again led the defense, stopping 45 shots to give the Huskies its 14th Hockey East win of the season.

In the opening period both teams held strong defensively despite a heavy shot volume. The Huskies fired a season-high 25 shots in the first period to take control offensively early on. Boston College's senior goaltender Grace Campbell held strong to keep the Huskies off the scoreboard, despite their many attempts. The Huskies earned the period's only power-play opportunity but were unable to convert this opportunity, ending the first period scoreless.

The Huskies came out strong in the second period with junior forward Ashley Allard scoring her seventh goal of the season just 34 seconds into the period. Boston College quickly responded with a goal of their own midway through the period to tie the game. However, UConn quickly regained the lead with a power-play goal by freshman True Thompson.

The Huskies were able to

maintain their lead powered by Woodworth, who recorded two goals. Her first goal came just 16 seconds after Thompson's goal, while her second was recorded with just over a minute remaining in the period. Woodworth's explosive offensive energy gave the Huskies a 4-1 lead heading into the third period and recorded Woodworth's 13th goal of the season.

The Huskies continued to dominate going into the third period, extending their lead 5-1 six minutes in with a goal from sophomore forward Sadie Hottel. Junior forward Julia Pellerin continued the Huskies dominance with her 10th goal of the season, bringing the Huskies to a 6-1 lead.

Boston College found their rhythm too late into the game, scoring with just under a minute remaining, bringing the Huskies to a 6-2 victory. UConn finished with a season-high 58 shots on goal, outshooting Boston College 58-47. Chan drove the win defensively recording her fifth 40-plus save performance of the season and finishing just three saves shy of her season high.

The Huskies will look to continue the momentum next weekend for two more Hockey East matchups. The Huskies will first travel to Durham, N.H. to take on the University of New Hampshire on Friday, Feb. 13 with puck drop at 2 p.m. On Saturday, Feb. 14 the Huskies will travel to Boston to take on Boston University with puck drop at 4 p.m. Husky fans can tune into both matchups on FloSports.



The UConn women's hockey team faces off against Boston College on Feb. 7, 2026. The teams were tied 0-0 at the end of the first period, but the Huskies went on to win the game 6-2. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

# Men's Hockey:

## UCONN COMPLETES SEASON SWEEP OF NORTHEASTERN WITH A SHUTOUT



The UConn men's hockey team faces Merrimack College at Toscano Family Ice Forum on Dec. 6, 2025. The Huskies won with a final score of 5-2. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Brayden Gorski  
STAFF WRITER  
HE/HIM/HIS  
brayden.gorski@uconn.edu

The UConn Huskies traveled to Bentley Arena on Friday night and left as the top dogs, defeating the Northeastern Huskies 2-0.

Along with the season sweep for Connecticut, it is their fifth consecutive win against Northeastern dating back to last season.

The win moves UConn to 10-5-1 in Hockey East and 16-7-3 on the season as the NCAA tournament looms.

Northeastern dominated possession of the puck for the first few minutes, including a great look from Joe Connor, which goalie Tyler Muszelik barely got his blocker pad on.

After that shot attempt, UConn took over on offense. Mike Murtagh found Ethan Whitcomb who took the puck into the corner. Whitcomb got a pass by two defenders and found Ethan Gardula who was unaccounted for by the Northeastern defenders. All Gardula had to do was tip it past goalie Lawton Zacher and it was 1-0 early in the game for Connecticut.

UConn controlled most of the puck time for the rest of the period and despite both squads having multiple shot attempts, the score was 1-0 UConn after one period.

The referee's whistle started blowing early in the second period. First, Brendan Dunphy was penalized for cross checking, causing UConn to

go shorthanded. The only real opportunity during the power play was a shot from the dangerous Giacomo Martino. The freshman has five power play goals this season, but he missed his shot and Northeastern missed their chance.

The Ice Bus did a great job on the penalty kill even getting a breakaway attempt from Tabor Heaslip.

Minutes after Dunphy returned to the ice, Matthew Maltais was called for a Northeastern slashing penalty. Unfortunately for Connecticut, they could not string together any real opportunities in the two minutes of 5 on 4 hockey.

UConn seized an opportunity moments later. Tristan Fraser won a puck battle against three Northeastern players and got the puck to Heaslip. With only one defender in front of him, the goal and Alexander Blais, Heaslip dished it to Blais and the freshman did the rest. It was 2-0 Connecticut midway through the second period.

The score would stay that way for the rest of the second as the intensity began to rise from both squads heading into the final period of regulation.

Northeastern came out of the locker room firing in the third period. They had possession of the puck for multiple minutes to start the period before UConn finally cleared the puck.

Connecticut had opportunities of their own to score,

especially after an errant pass ended up at the stick of Jake Richard on a breakaway. Northeastern's Jack Henry decided that a slashing penalty was better than a 3-0 deficit, so he headed to the penalty box. UConn could not capitalize and were on the defensive for the remainder of the game.

In the final two minutes, Northeastern head coach Jerry Keefe pulled Zacher to get an extra attacker on the ice. That decision did not phase the UConn defense as it stood strong for the final two minutes before the horn sounded.

It was the first shutout of the season for Muszelik and UConn, all while killing a power play and essentially killing another one in the final two minutes. Muszelik had 16 saves on the night, which is one of his lowest save counts of the season. A testament to how impactful the UConn defense was Friday night.

Connecticut remains tied for second in the Hockey East alongside Boston College, who they will meet for a heavy-weight battle in two weeks' time.

Next on the docket for the Ice Bus are the Maine Black Bears. UConn will travel nearly five hours to UMaine for two important Hockey East matchups.

Two big weekends of games are ahead for UConn, fans hope this weekend's results and the Ice Bus' second straight CT Ice Championship last month can get them going for the final stretch of the season.



# Sports

## Men's Basketball:

### NO. 3 UCONN'S 18-GAME WIN STREAK ENDS AT NO. 22 ST. JOHN'S, 81-72

by **Sam Calhoun**  
STAFF WRITER  
HE/HIM/HIS  
sam.calhoun@uconn.edu

For the third consecutive time, UConn (22-2, 12-1 Big East), ranked third in the AP Poll, lost to St. John's (18-5, 11-1 Big East), ranked No. 22 in the country. It is the first three-game losing streak for the Huskies in the series since the 1999-2000 season.

The Huskies had not lost since Nov. 19 at home against Arizona, considered the best team in the sport at the time. That loss was without Tarris Reed Jr. and Braylon Mullins, making Friday night's loss the first loss at full strength.

"It's a hard feeling," said Alex Karaban, who finished the night with 17 points on 7-of-10 shooting. "We hate losing here. We work way too hard to play like that and lose. We invest too much time to lose. It's not an easy feeling to sit with right now."

Both teams had momentum coming into Madison Square Garden. Connecticut had won 18 straight, while the Red Storm had won eight in a row. It was hard to argue against UConn having more momentum, finding a rhythm on offense as of late.

It turned out that Rick Pitino and the Johnnies had the blueprint to stop a red-hot offense.

"We've been a cat with nine lives a couple of times, so there was not a feeling on the team and staff that we were indestructible," Dan Hurley said after the game. "We knew this was going to be a hard game to win."

All eyes were on the battle between the Big East's best centers: Reed and St. John's Zuby Ejiofor. Both are in the mix for Big East Player of the Year.

Reed had the advantage early in this contest, scoring eight points in the first half on 3-of-6 shooting. Whenever Dillon Mitchell guarded him in the first half, the "Kodiak Bear" feasted.

However, Ejiofor reminded people why he is the favorite for Big East Player of the Year and has been the favorite since Big East Media Day.

The reigning Big East Most

Improved Player went off in the second half, scoring 14 of his 21 points. He was the best player on the floor by a large margin, finishing the night shooting 6-of-10 from the floor, 8-of-10 from the free-throw line, grabbing 10 rebounds, dishing out seven assists, blocking three shots and recording two steals. That is as dominant a performance as you will see in the Big East this season.

Mitchell would also find his footing after a slow defensive start, putting up 15 points and six rebounds. Bryce Hopkins had 14 points and six rebounds. Overall, the Red Storm's starting frontcourt shot 17-of-26.

"They're grown [expletive] men," Hurley said.

Reed finished the night scoring 12 points on 5-of-10 shooting and grabbed six boards. However, foul trouble limited him, and that was one of the main reasons UConn lost this one.

Connecticut shot 54.7% from the floor, knocking down nine 3-pointers. However, turnovers, foul trouble and free throws decided the game.

Silas Demary Jr. was UConn's best player on Friday night, scoring 18 points on 7-of-11 shooting while recording seven rebounds and five assists. He would also get into foul trouble with three, but the glaring stat was his nine turnovers. That is the second-most in a single game in his career. He had 10 turnovers against St. John's last year as a Georgia Bulldog.

"It was Great Adventure," Hurley said to describe Demary's performance. "It was a roller-coaster ride."

Overall, UConn turned the ball over 15 times. Outside of Demary, no one had more than one turnover.

Connecticut's weakness is free-throw shooting. Even though St. John's went 22-of-31 from the charity stripe, the Huskies did not do themselves any favors by going 5-of-12 from the line. That is 41.7%. UConn made more 3-pointers than free throws. This season, the Huskies are shooting a dismal 69.8% from the free-throw line.

"Officiating is a tough thing to do; that's not why we lost," Hurley said, who was irritated

by two non-calls after the game.

Both teams went back-and-forth for a good portion of the game, but a 10-0 run by the Red Storm gave them a 55-45 lead with 13 minutes remaining.

Demary took over for part of the second half and got the game within one point on a 3-pointer with 5:35 to go but never retook the lead.

Madison Square Garden is known to UConn fans as "Storrs South." However, there was an overwhelming amount of red in the building on Friday night. Connecticut fans did not take over the building as they had in the past.

"I looked around during the [national] anthem and saw a lot of red," Hurley said. "That felt like a real road game."

Pitino thought the split was 90% St. John's fans to 10% UConn fans.

So, despite making more shots overall and from downtown, St. John's used defense and free throws to beat the Huskies. It was the first top-three win at the World's Most Famous Arena since 2011, when the Red Storm took down then-No. 3 Duke.

Mark your calendars for the second time these two teams meet: Feb. 25 in Hartford, Conn. That could certainly decide the Big East regular-season title.

Next up for UConn is another road game at Butler on Wednesday night.

## Women's Basketball:

### UCONN SHELLACKS BUTLER 80-48, WITHOUT SARAH STRONG



The UConn women's basketball team in action. The team held their No. 1 this past Saturday in their match against Butler University, despite being down five players. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by **Avery Becker**  
ASSOCIATE SPORTS EDITOR  
SHE/HER/HERS  
avery.becker@uconn.edu

When a basketball program is without their star player, the question arises of who will fill that void come game time.

The top-ranked UConn women's basketball team was down five players Saturday afternoon for their matchup against Butler, including their leading scorer, Sarah Strong.

"Just trying to make sure whatever tightness she feels doesn't go any further. If she had to play today, she would've played," head coach Geno Auriemma said when asked about the decision to rest Strong. "I mean, that's not a problem. But we've got a long way ahead of us."

Despite being without one of their most integral roster members, UConn took care of business, defeating Butler 80-48.

In addition to Strong, UConn was without freshman Blanca Quiñonez (shoulder), Caroline Ducharme (migraine), Morgan Cheli and Ice Brady, who have been sitting out for most of the season due to an ankle injury and knee inflammation, respectively.

Even with five players out, the entire roster took it upon themselves to fill those voids.

Senior Azzi Fudd led her squad, scoring 17 points and dishing four assists. In addition, Allie Ziebell and Jana El Alfy achieved new career highs with four steals and 11 rebounds, respectively.

"I think sometimes less is more if you stick to 'I need to be a better defender,' 'I need to be a better rebounder,' 'I need to be a better screener,' 'ball handler.' Then, you know, whatever points are there, you're going to be able to take advantage of those." Auriemma said when asked about El Alfy, who has been working on her confidence as a contributor off the bench as of late.

Every starter including Fudd, KK Arnold, Ashlynn Shade, Serah Williams and Ziebell, who started in place of Strong, finished with points in the double digits.

As the game kicked

off, the Huskies' offense was stagnant, making the absence of Strong and Quiñonez transparent.

"Especially the first half, I felt her absence when just I felt like we weren't attacking enough," Fudd said postgame when asked about when her squad felt Strong's absence the most. "But I thought all of us just know it's hard to pick up when someone like Sarah Strong's out. But I saw all of us just trying to do a little bit more."

In the second quarter, the Huskies started to get more comfortable on the offensive end, forcing the Bulldogs to only put up six points.

At the end of the first half, the Huskies led 44-19.

With such a sizeable lead, Auriemma utilized the depth of his bench to his advantage, including players like Kelis Fisher to wreak havoc on the defensive end.

"The great thing about Kelis [Fisher] is that she's so explosive and she can just single-handedly change a game and we have to weigh all the time, 'What percentage of the time is she helping our team,' and 'What percentage of the time is she helping the other team?'" Auriemma said postgame, "Every day she's getting better, every day, every day she's learning more, every day she's communicating better."

Fisher finished the afternoon with a total of six points and three rebounds, leading UConn's defensive charge in the second half.

Throughout the game, UConn capitalized, contributing 37 points to their final score off the 23 turnovers they forced on Butler. In addition, the Huskies racked up 42 total points in the paint.

With this win, Connecticut will extend their winning streak to 41 games and in addition to it just being a regular season game, the Huskies played for more than just basketball.

The Huskies held their annual Play4Kay game, honoring those who have been affected by cancer.

"I imagine everyone has someone their life that's been affected by cancer," Fudd said postgame, "I know I have, so to play in this game, to play for them — I mean, we play every game for the name on our chest, but then today, to play for all those other people, it's an honor."

UConn will pivot their focus to the second game of their conference homestand. The Huskies will gear up to take on the Creighton Bluejays at Gampel Pavilion on Wednesday evening.

Tip-off is scheduled for 7 p.m. Fans can tune in to the game on Peacock.

The UConn Huskies take on the St John's Red Storm at Madison Square Garden in New York City on Feb. 6, 2026. Despite a close game, the Huskies lost 72-81. PHOTO BY EMMA MEIDINGER, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

