



Two more sheep died in barn fire than first reported



The moon rises over Horsebarn Hill on Tuesday Feb 3, 2026 in Storrs, Conn.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NAME NAME, POSITION/THE DAILY CAMPUS

by Kevin Guinan
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A fire at a livestock barn on the University of Connecticut Storrs campus killed six sheep instead of the four originally announced on Saturday, according to the university spokesperson.

Spokesperson Stephanie Reitz said in an email Tuesday that two of the sheep were adults and four were lambs. The investigation of the fire's origin is still being conducted by the UConn Fire Marshal's Unit, according to Reitz.

The fire occurred in Livestock Unit I which typically houses about 90 ewes (female sheep) and 45 beef cows which are used at the Department of Animal Science for teaching, research and community extension programs, according to Reitz.

"The fire has not significantly impacted education, research, or extension activities in the department."

STEPHANIE RIETZ

The barn is not open to the public, but visitors are able to use

outdoor paddocks in Livestock Unit I from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., according to the Department of Animal Science's website. Schools also frequently schedule field trips to visit the barns.

The damaged portion of the barn is not being used while repairs are planned, according to Reitz. She added that staff are working to ensure the wellbeing of the animals and rearrange their housing in other parts of the facility.

"The fire has not significantly impacted education, research, or extension activities in the department," Reitz said, referring to the College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural Resources.

Firefighters at UConn were alerted of the fire around 8 p.m. and arrived with assistance from Coventry's and Mansfield's mutual aid crews. The response team was able to extinguish the fire before the barn was heavily damaged, according to Reitz.

It is not currently known if anybody was in the barn when the fire broke out, according to WFSB.

An alarm system that activated in the barn shortly after 8 p.m. helped fire officials quickly respond and extinguish the barn fire before any significant damage occurred, according to Reitz.

Petition released for UConn to stand against ICE

by Jenna Outcalt
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A coalition of organizations at the University of Connecticut released a petition calling for the university to take a clearer stand against U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on Thursday, Feb. 12.

The petition alleges that UConn has not been clear about how or whether it will protect the immigrant community at the school. A representative of the coalition who asked to remain anonymous said the petition's demands offer clearer actionable steps UConn could take.

"While we do appreciate that the university is thinking about these things, we do think that their actions have been insufficient thus far to protect the UConn community, and we think that our demands are very good steps that they could be taking to keep the community safe," the representative said.

On the same day the petition was released, UConn sent an announcement with guidance for potential interactions with immigration agents. It recommended that someone dealing with federal agents inform the agent that they are required to contact a university official to help handle the situation.

The coalition representative said that ICE "[doesn't] sit calmly while people call people."

"A large portion of the university community is deeply disturbed by what we see happening and what ICE has been doing across the nation..."

COALITION REPRESENTATIVE

"The university's statement



Students ignite lighters at a vigil to honor the victims of ICE at Dove Tower on Feb. 4, 2026. Event organizers, as well as attendees, shared their stories and messages to the crowd.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

was insufficient in keeping its community safe because it really did not offer any clear protocols on whether university employees are being trained on how to deal with ICE," the representative said.

The coalition supporting the petition also linked a full list of demands for UConn President Radenka Maric, the board of trustees and UConn administration.

UConn did not provide comment on the petition, but it directed students to resources like the 2025 Q&A about immigration issues on campus and the school's list of resources for the international community.

The coalition representative said the lack of clarity in UConn's protocol "puts

the community at risk."

"Really all they've said up until this point is that it's 'virtually impossible' — that's a quote from them — to designate private and public spaces, which is a very important demand that we have, because ICE needs a judicial warrant to go onto any non-public space on campus," the representative said.

The representative also said the end goal was to ensure the immigrant community on campus feels safe.

"Those communities that we've worked very closely with in developing these demands have expressed time and time again that they don't feel safe on campus," the representative said. "They don't

feel that the administration has done enough to keep them and the rest of the community at UConn with precarious immigration status safe."

The petition is growing close to its current goal of 1,500 signatures. The coalition representative said they had already increased the signature goal and planned to increase it again as more signatures came in.

The representative said the petition had over 1,000 signatures within the first 24 hours of its release and that the immediate support showed the "strong feeling among the UConn community that the administration should do anything in its power to keep people at the university safe."

"A large portion of the university community is united over the issue of immigration. A large portion of the student population at the university is deeply disturbed by what we see happening and what ICE has been doing across the nation," the representative said. "I think this is really a statement that the UConn community cares about what is happening with ICE."

EDITOR'S NOTE

Tomas Hinckley, the opinion editor at The Daily Campus is a member of one of the organizations that assembled the petition; however, he did not participate in writing the petition.

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No. 5 UConn hosts struggling Creighton on Wednesday night

WE ARE NOT THE DAILY DIGEST

News

SUBOG's Winter Week begins



UConn Students scoop ice cream into buckets for SUBOG's annual One Ton Sundae event. This year, the event will be held during the week of February 15.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SUBOG OUTREACH TEAM

by **Pierce Colfer**
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Students who are looking for fun events to celebrate the winter feeling are in luck! SUBOG's Winter Week has begun, consisting of five free winter-themed events for students at the University of Connecticut to check out.

On Feb. 19, Moonlight Breakfast will be hosted in the Student Union Ballroom at 7 p.m. and One Ton Sundae will be held on the Student Union Terrace on Feb. 20 at 11 a.m.

Students must bring their UConn IDs to participate in the events.

The Winter Week commenced on Feb. 13 with the Build Your Own Bouquet or Chocolate Box event and continued with the Prize Basket Bingo on Feb. 17. Students who bought a ticket will be going on a ski trip to Wachusett Mountain on Feb. 21, though tickets are now sold out.

Chi-Chi Onoh, an eighth-semester English major who serves as SUBOG's Major Weekends Chair, talked about what students can get out of attending these events.

"On campus it feels like there's genuinely nothing to do, and going to an event like

this can be fun," Onoh said. "You can meet people and talk to people... as opposed to being stuck on campus doing nothing. It's always nice to have something to do."

The highlight of the Winter Week is One Ton Sundae, where students will be given a bucket to fill up with UConn Dairy Bar ice cream. After getting ice cream, students will get the opportunity to spin a wheel to try to win SUBOG merchandise, including mugs and pajamas.

"The later you come to an event, the harder it's going to be to get to the front of the line...also, don't cut the line."

ALEX HOUESHELL

"It's very popular," Onoh said. "In the middle of winter too, when it's freezing cold and everyone's like 'Yeah, I'm going to eat a bucket of ice cream.'"

Onoh advised any students interested in coming to the events to come "as early as you can."

"The later you come to an event, the harder it's going to be to get to the front of the line," Onoh said. "Especially with [One Ton Sundae], that line is abysmally long... and also, don't cut the line."

M&T Bank is sponsoring One Ton Sundae and will be providing students in line with beanies and gloves, Onoh said.

At the Moonlight Breakfast event, breakfast will be served from 7 to 9 p.m. and crafts will be available, including diamond painting and crochet kits, according to a SUBOG Instagram post. Food and crafts will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis.

"It's really just eating breakfast at night," Onoh said. "It's pretty chill. We haven't done it for, I think like two, three years, so then, once I heard about it, I was like, I think that'd be nice just to have people sit down, have breakfast."

SUBOG will also be hosting their third annual World of Food event in the Student Union Ballroom on Feb. 22nd at 7 p.m., which will feature Nigerian, Mexican, Greek, Brazilian and Korean food according to a SUBOG Instagram post.

More information about the events will be posted on SUBOG's Instagram throughout the week.

WE INVITE YOU TO

Moonlight Breakfast and Crafts

FEBRUARY 19
7-10 PM
SU BALLROOM

BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED FROM 7-9.

Subog's poster for their first event in the 2026 Winter Week. The week will begin with Moonlight Breakfast, and culminate with the annual One Ton Sundae event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @SUBOGATUCONN ON INSTAGRAM

The Daily Campus

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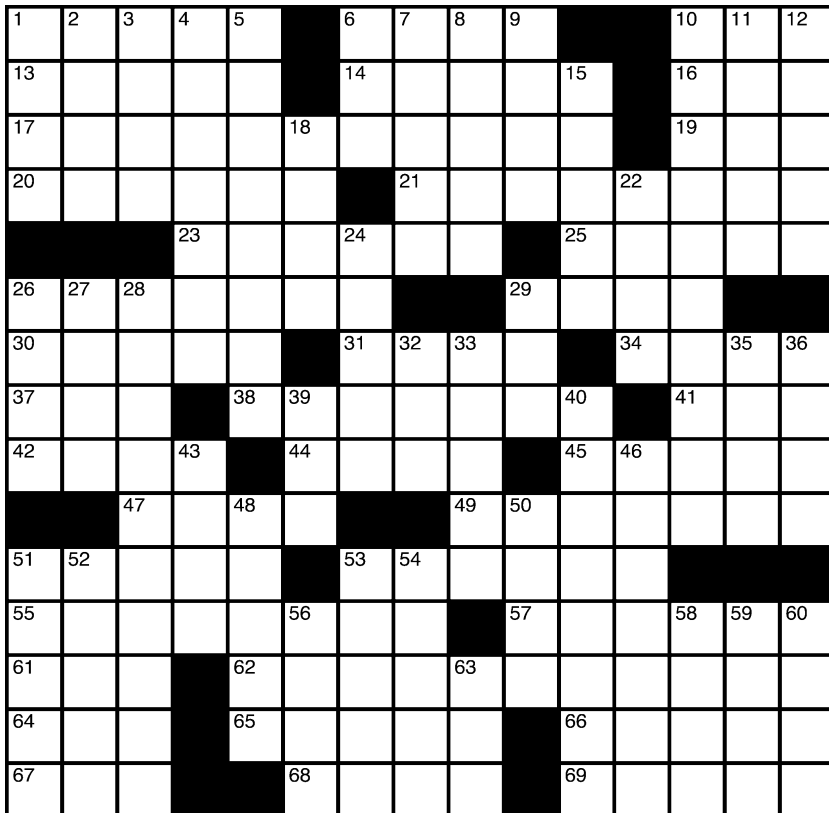
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THE DAILY CAMPUS CROSSWORD & SUDOKU

- ACROSS**
- 1 Winter X Games host city
 - 6 "Hey, c'mere!"
 - 10 Park place?
 - 13 ___ Doone cookies
 - 14 Navel type
 - 16 Janelle's "Abbott Elementary" role
 - 17 *Pointless task
 - 19 Derisive cry
 - 20 Chances to swing
 - 21 *Climb without ropes
 - 23 Like the most yellow banana on the tree
 - 25 Urgent care employee
 - 26 Chemical synthesis need
 - 29 Not on solid ground
 - 30 Desert refuges
 - 31 Messy pile
 - 34 Goblet part
 - 37 Telethon VIPs
 - 38 *Craftsman kit
 - 41 Prospector's find
 - 42 Sigh of relief
 - 44 "You sure of that?"
 - 45 Pieces of the heart
 - 47 Noble title
 - 49 Had a great time at
 - 51 Quickly get through a season
 - 53 Gets out of Dodge
 - 55 *Squeaker
 - 57 Swashbuckler's sword
 - 61 Downside
 - 62 Collection found under sofa cushions, or what can be found in the answers to the starred clues?
 - 64 N.J. winter hrs.
 - 65 Bunch of flowers
 - 66 Gas in some colorful signs
 - 67 Software engineer, for short
 - 68 Exceedingly dry
 - 69 ___ of all



By Joe Marquez

2/12/26

DOWN

- 1 A in communications?
- 2 Chimney buildup
- 3 "Not my ___"
- 4 Blow up
- 5 Most unpleasant
- 6 "¿___ qué?"
- 7 Sees the sites
- 8 Kick off
- 9 Prong
- 10 Place for experiments
- 11 Shapes formed by spotlights
- 12 Lake in the Sierra Nevada
- 15 Utopias
- 18 "30 for 30" network
- 22 Takes to court
- 24 Shared belief system
- 26 Easy win
- 27 Per person
- 28 Product line?
- 29 Primatology subject
- 32 Pharmaceutical giant ___ Lilly
- 33 Daisy kin
- 35 Maumee River endpoint
- 36 Honey brew
- 39 Canola ___
- 40 Mausoleum on the Yamuna River
- 43 Happy dog's movements
- 46 In reserve
- 48 Film rolls
- 50 Drug cop
- 51 Secretly looped in
- 52 "No prize for me this time"
- 53 Nap noisily
- 54 Labor leader Chavez
- 56 Unwelcome sound from a barber
- 58 Actress Swenson
- 59 Impediments to effective teamwork
- 60 Monopoly payment
- 63 Needle part

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

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Solution to Wednesday's puzzle

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Life



LOGO BY ESHITHA RAO, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS

BRITISH INVASION:

GEORGE HARRISON

by **Ayyan Tamjeed**

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Today on British Invasion — the column that talks about both Mr. Blobby and The Beatles in the same breath — I hope to start a series exploring the solo careers of all four Beatles members. As one of the most well-documented bands in history, it's interesting to see what these men did after they struck out on their own. First up on our docket will be George Harrison, the “quiet Beatle.”

Let's start at the beginning of the end. Despite two previous studio albums — a soundtrack album and one that's mostly just Harrison mucking about with Moog synthesizers — Harrison's real post-Beatles debut was the sprawling 1970 album “All Things Must Pass.”

The first triple album of its kind, it was recorded at Abbey Road between May and October 1970 with Phil Spector — who worked on the last Beatles album “Let It Be” — and received immediate criti-

cal and commercial success. After years of fighting to get two or three songs featured on a Beatles album, Harrison gets to show off the songwriting chops he built during the 1960s, and his increasing interest in artists like The Band and Bob Dylan.

“My Sweet Lord” is the best example of Harrison's songwriting prowess, a beautiful song about spirituality and God that could take you to a higher plane with its intricate, expressive slide guitar solo and upbeat chants of “Hallelujah” and “Hare Krishna.”

In 1970, Harrison bought the Friar Park estate in Oxfordshire, England, built by an eccentric lawyer, Sir Frank Crisp. Harrison and his wife Olivia restored the Victorian Mansion and its 32 acres to its former glory and even used the main lawn as the background for the album cover for “All Things Must Pass.” Gardening soon became an important part of Harrison's identity; his 1980 autobiography is dedicated to “All gardeners everywhere” and he viewed it as a form of escapism from the world.

Speaking of escapism, a big influence on Harrison's songwriting and mindset was Indian culture and music. He took two pilgrimages to India, one with his first wife Pattie Boyd in 1966 and another with the rest of his bandmates two years later to Rishikesh, India, studying meditation under Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.

It was during his first visit that he met Ravi Shankar, a prodigious sitar player who taught Harrison the instrument and gave him multiple texts on Hinduism and yoga, a spiritual practice that originated in India and on that Harrison advocated for during the rest of his life.

Shankar was also the person who brought Harrison's attention to the plight of the Bengali musician's homeland in what was then known as East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). After being ravaged by the Bhola cyclone in 1970 and fighting a war for independence from Pakistan the next year, there was a massive refugee problem. Harrison responded to Shankar's request for a charity event, in the

hopes of raising aid for refugees.

This request culminated in The Concert for Bangladesh, a star-studded charity concert that included performances from Shankar, Harrison, Dylan and more. Over 40 thousand people attended the two shows in Madison Square Garden and raised over \$250,000 in aid through gate receipts. Not only did this show raise awareness about Bangladesh, but it also served as a precursor to later benefit shows like Live Aid.

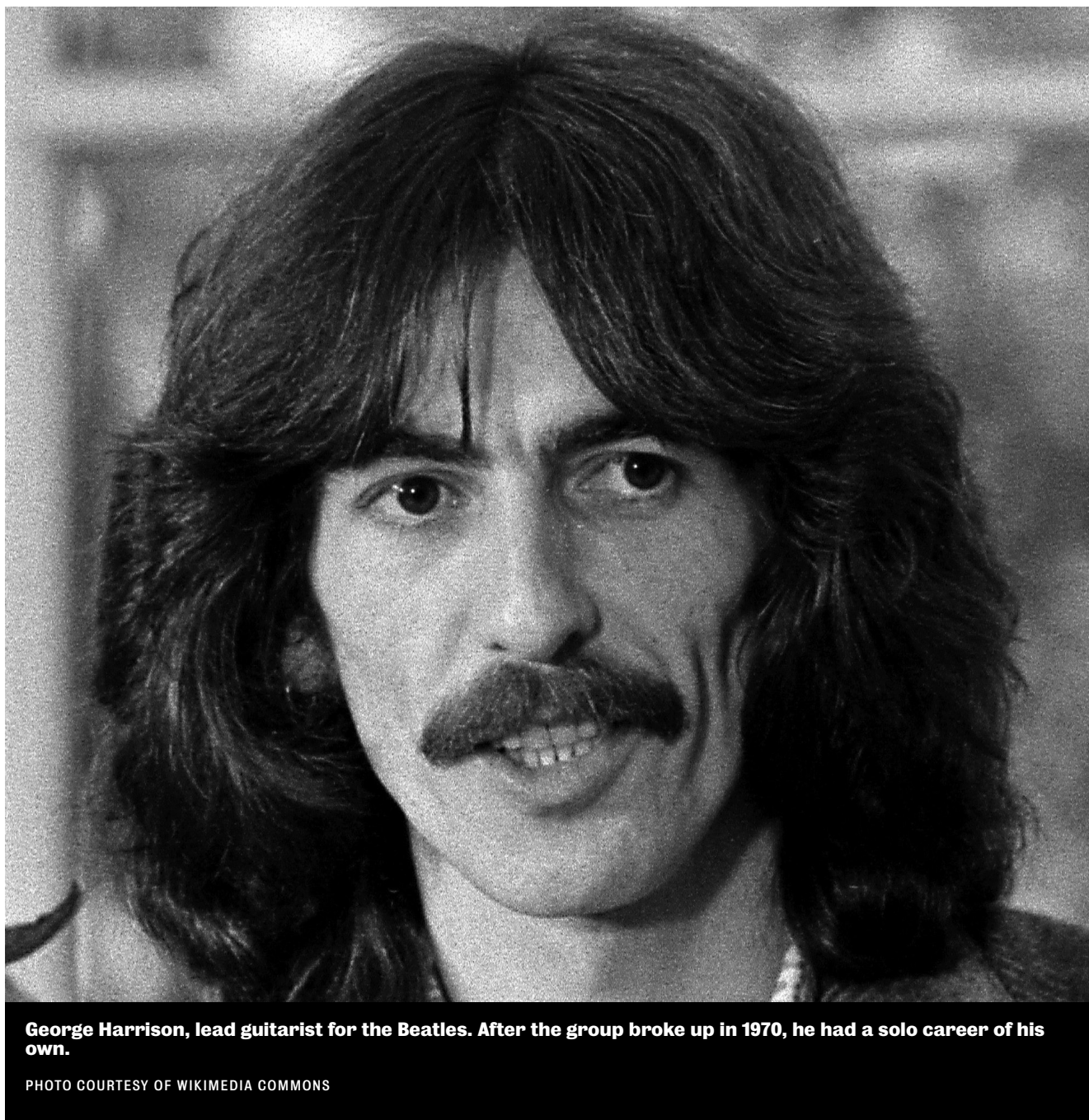
After a disastrous North American tour in 1974 and after 1982's “Gone Troppo” barely made a squeak in America, Harrison retreated from the spotlight to produce films. With production company HandMade Films, he produced Monty Python's “Life of Brian” in 1979 and the Madonna/Sean Penn flop “Shanghai Surprise” in 1986. Harrison recorded some songs for the soundtrack, which gave him the itch to work on his first album in five years, “Cloud Nine.”

“Cloud Nine” was effectively a career revival for Harrison, who

co-produced with Jeff Lynne of Electric Light Orchestra. With Lynne and his long-time collaborators in tow, they managed to get the last U.S number one hit from a Beatle with the cover of James Ray's “Got My Mind Set On You.”

Stereogum writer Tom Breihan succinctly describes the song as “a fantastically successful 44-year-old man singing a song that he liked when he was a kid.” A lot of your enjoyment from this cover will stem from how much you like George Harrison the man.

In 1997, he was diagnosed with throat cancer, which was fortunately treated through radiotherapy. Two years later though, he was attacked in his home at Friar Park by a home intruder, and the stab wounds he received in his lung brought back his cancer. After going through cancer treatments in 2001, he passed away in Los Angeles, Calif., on Nov. 29, 2001. According to his wife Olivia, his final messages for fans of his work said, “Everything else can wait but the search for God cannot wait, and love one another.”

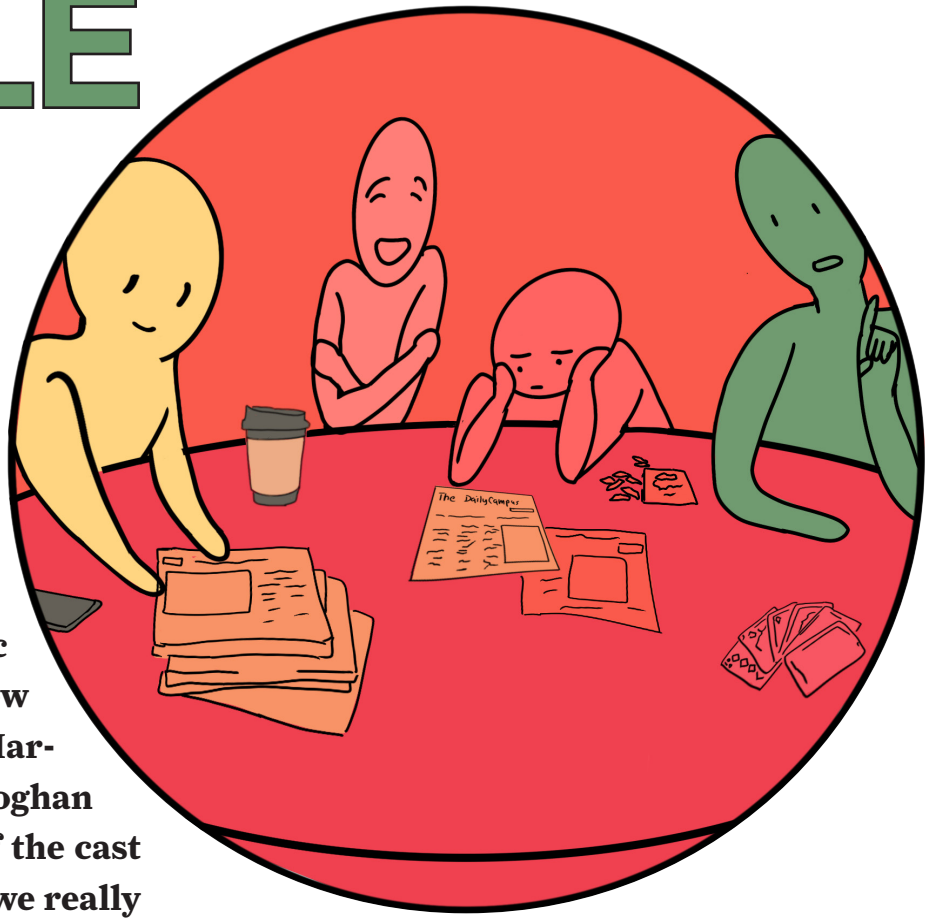


George Harrison, lead guitarist for the Beatles. After the group broke up in 1970, he had a solo career of his own.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

ROUNDTABLE

The Beatles Biopic: SEE OR SKIP?



LOGO BY LILLIAN LAFEMINA, ASSOCIATE ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

As one of the most recognizable bands of all time, the Beatles have unsurprisingly found an eternal foothold within the world of pop culture. In keeping with the current biopic trend, director Sam Mendes is currently working on a new film featuring the Fab Four, starring Paul Mescal (Paul), Harris Dickinson (John), Joseph Quinn (George) and Barry Keoghan (Ringo). But with the release of new set photos showing off the cast dressed as the iconic band, one question has remained: Do we really need a Beatles biopic?

by Maleena Muzio
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Unfortunately, I am very tired of biopics, and the Beatles movies are adding to that frustration. Don't get me wrong, I think if a group deserves a movie, it is definitely the Beatles (despite them not even being one of my favorite bands), but I find the timing poor and inauthentic.

Audiences have already become well acquainted with biopics delving into the worlds of musicians through a series of movies, such as "Elvis" by Baz Luhrmann and "Prescilla" by Sofia Coppola. I am interested in seeing the world of The Beatles strung together by one sole director, but I think waiting a few more years or even a decade could have made these movies more impactful.

To me, it just feels very strange to have well-known Hollywood actors playing some of the most iconic musicians of all time — two of whom are still living. Maybe if lesser-known actors, as opposed to Eddie Munson (Joseph Quinn) from "Stranger Things" or Sabrina Carpenter's famous ex (Barry Keoghan) were cast, I would feel less uneasy about the films.

by Ayyan Tamjeed
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This is exactly what the world needs right now, a music biopic on The Beatles; one of, if not, the most well-documented bands in history. Even so, I wouldn't mind hitting theaters for a quadruple feature on all four members. For one, the cast doesn't seem too half-bad; Paul Mescal and Barry Keoghan are playing two of the Fab Four and Saoirse Ronan somehow managed to sign on for this project.

Also, in all the deluge of post-breakup anthologies, films and box sets, we've never had a biopic on any of the Beatles, as far as I know. I'm excited to see how Sam Mendes and co. will explore the lives of these four extraordinary people through the language of film. Hopefully, they won't go down the "Bohemian Rhapsody" route and create a bog-standard rags-to-riches story that's played up for nostalgia.

Lastly, why are all four films being released simultaneously? I think it makes more financial and practical sense to spread out the release dates. The films will take over a year to shoot, and you're putting yourself in post-production hell to get these films ready for 2028. I hope the editors get paid overtime.

by Elijah Polance
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It feels like biopics, especially those about music stars, are all the rage these days, so a new cinematic exploration of The Beatles was bound to happen. Sam Mendes' ambitious spin, having a film for each specific Beatle, seems pretty exciting.

But I still find myself wondering: what's the point? The Beatles already have the documentary "Get Back," an authentic portrayal that covers the later portion of their career. When projects like that exist, I don't see the point of fictional retellings, especially when it demands actors to try singing like the musician they're emulating (I commend Timothée Chalamet's Bob Dylan impression, but it really isn't the same).

Fortunately, my knowledge of actors is very poor, so three of the actors cast as a Beatle didn't immediately ruin my immersion off looks alone. However, I did recognize Barry Keoghan, and even in costume, he will never match the look of Ringo enough to sell me.

by Thaddeus Sawyer
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The Beatles absolutely deserve an officially sanctioned biopic. It seems that the four-movie set-up will allow director Sam Mendes to go in depth into their lives and avoid the "Wikipedia Problem:" trying to condense every detail of a person's life into a two-hour movie. This is the problem that plagued films such as "Bohemian Rhapsody."

As for the casting choices, it's obvious that they don't look very much like the Fab Four. It's even more obvious when you realize that in the promotional pics likely will be the most the cast will ever resemble the real members.

I'd be willing to sacrifice a lookalike for better acting ability any day, however. We aren't supposed to be watching Paul McCartney talk about his life. If I wanted that, I would watch the recently remastered "Anthology" series. We are watching an entertaining, artistic portrayal that captures his essence. I'm willing to give the actors the chance to effectively do so.

by Jaylyn Davis
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The Beatles are by far one of the most significant bands that anyone has ever known. I love the Beatles, primarily John Lennon, and it'll be interesting to see how Sam Mendes tells the story of the Beatles in the upcoming biopic, considering that biopics can misrepresent certain parts of a celebrity's story. Yet Mendes is known for directing notable movies such as "American Beauty" and "1917." So, maybe he'll make the plot and storyline of the biopic stay true to the actual story of the Beatles.

One thing about the biopic that concerns me is the casting. The casting for Ringo Starr was exceptional, as the person who's playing him has a similar look and energy to Ringo. However, the actors playing John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison don't look like the musicians. Additionally, the actors playing the Beatles are not in their early twenties like the Beatles were when they first began their career. So, if the casting doesn't reflect the real Beatles, then will the plot and storyline not reflect the real Beatles either? We don't know for certain. However, as I mentioned, Mendes has directed some fabulous movies. So, while the casting of the biopic is skeptical, it may still turn out to be an excellent series of movies.

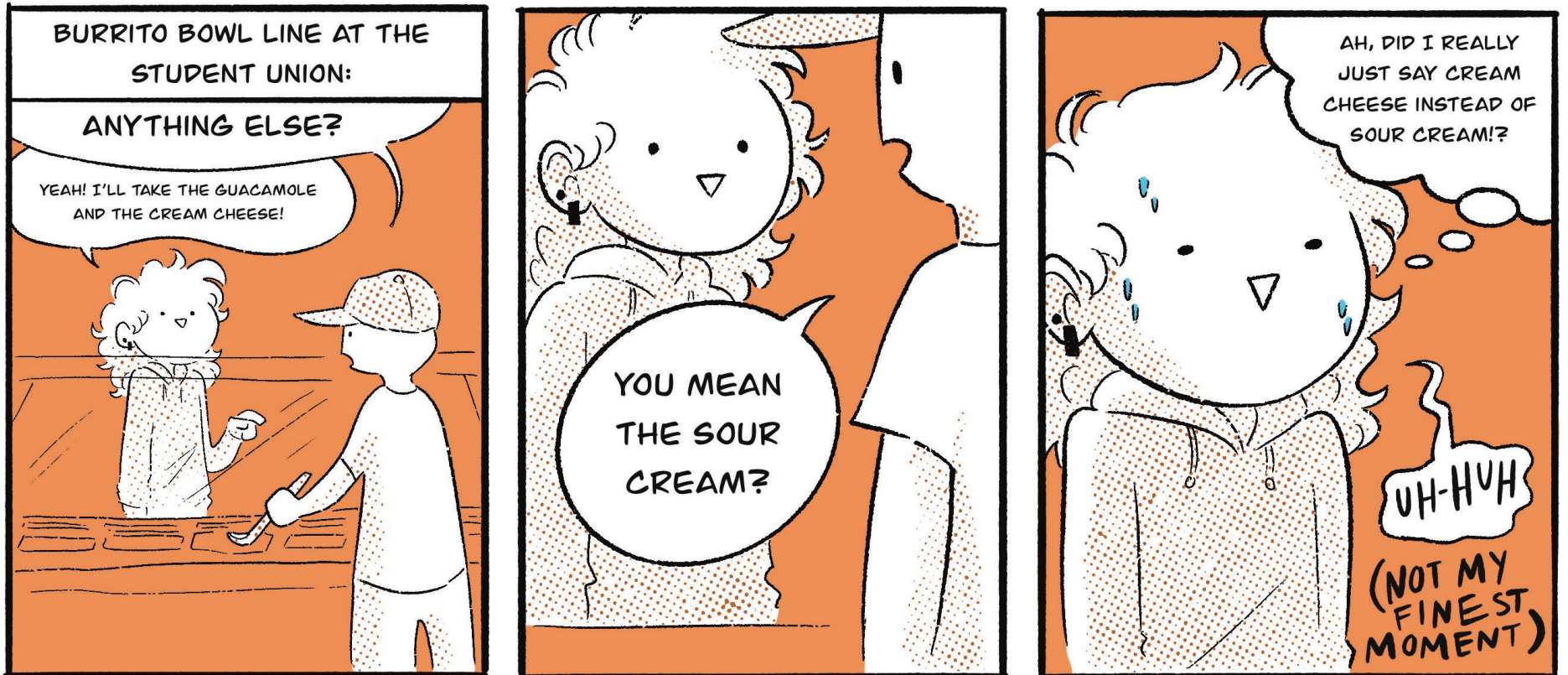


The album cover for Abbey Road, the eleventh studio album by the English rock band the Beatles. It was released on Sept. 26, 1969, by Apple Records. PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Life

COMICS



CARTOON BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

IDEAS FOR YOUR NEXT *spring break* PLANNING SESSION

by Samantha Brody
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With this year's Valentine's Day officially done and dusted, the University of Connecticut has begun a slow creep towards the next major holiday: spring break.

For the average college student, spring break is one of the best times to be a teenage-something, twenty-something young adult. Without any pressing family and friend obligations, such as Thanksgiving, Hannukah, Kwanzaa or Christmas, that distant horizon of eventual adulthood freedom only seems to be getting closer.

Unfortunately, spring break only comes once a year, so it's important to budget and spend your time wisely. Here are some suggestions and destinations so you can start planning your spring break before it gets too late.

For the New England resident

Spring break is all about location, and if you're lucky enough to live in New England with friends who are also in New England, you should have an easy time setting up some spring break plans.

The first and easiest option, in my opinion, is a trip to the Cape. I know, I know — as someone who has lived in Massachusetts her whole life, I understand Cape Cod is a boring answer at this point. But come on, it's so nice!

If you're interested in taking a trip out to sea, I cannot recommend Provincetown enough. It's well known for being a highly welcoming environment for the LGBTQ+ community, but it also comes with a host of bars, theaters, stores and plenty of street art. Coupled with a thriving community and a ton of street art, P-Town is the place to be.

My only suggestion? Be care-

ful with your wallet. Like all Cape towns, Provincetown can reach some high price points very quickly. If you're planning on staying in an Airbnb or a hotel or inn of some kind, keep an eye on where you go and how much you spend.

For going the distance

But sometimes local-ish isn't quite enough for the ideal spring break adventure. If you've got some money to spend on a big trip, where could one go?

Florida is a popular spot, along with California and maybe some spots in the Carolinas. Although Connecticut is small but mighty, it's easy to find one's mind wandering towards sunnier places. If you're that bored of regular college life, maybe it's time for a more dramatic change in scenery?

In the event you have the money for plane tickets, a stand-out spring break spot that can provide tons of pic-

tures would be a place like New Orleans — a unique local culture, music, art and drinking (if that's your thing).

Another fun option that would lead to an interesting Instagram recap is taking a trip to a national park. I had the pleasure of visiting Zion, Bryce Canyon and the Grand Canyon national parks a few years ago and I still think about returning. If any of these options intrigue you, Zion was my personal favorite.

For the stay-at-home student

But of course, at the end of the day, we're all college students on a tight budget. However, there are still plenty of options aside from just sitting at home or working.

If you happen to live near some good hiking spots and have access to a car, taking advantage of the (hopefully) nice weather can be an excellent start. I haven't properly been

hiking in some time and one of my personal goals for this year is to get outside more. Give it a try!

Spring break can also be an excellent time to catch up on the hobbies you've left by the wayside in favor of completing homework or fulfilling that student-org-based obligation. I spent a good chunk of my winter break reading, after having mostly stepped back from books in favor of school and a livelier social life.

If you need a few recommendations, I've recently read "Hijab Butch Blues" by Lamya H and "Nerd: Adventures in Fandom from This Universe to the Multiverse" by Maya Phillips. On my list, I have "Way of Kings" by Brandon Sanderson and "Braiding Sweetgrass" by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

No matter how or where you spend your spring break, at least the people of UConn can all agree on one thing: It's better than nothing!



Zion National Park in the United States of America. This park is one of the most travelled to in the state of Utah. PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



Opinion

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KEEP THE ROBOTS OUT OF OUR CLASSROOMS

by Colin Hamilton
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The hype around artificial intelligence technology has driven it to be implemented all around us — from businesses to search engines. Yet its controversial nature has nonetheless made it a topic of fierce debate, as more and more studies are released showing the serious harm AI infrastructure poses to our planet, health and job security. Most concerning, though, is its recent introduction into our education systems. The technology has been rapidly adopted by both teachers and students as a path towards seemingly faster learning. Even here at the University of Connecticut, the use of AI has seen a marked increase this year. That alone is not a surprise — its use as a quick and easy means to an end has earned it a place of honor among the stressed-out and sleep deprived student body of our college, who seek an easy solution to their workload. Even some of our professors have begun encouraging the use of artificial intelligence, building it in as a key part of their pedagogy, with classes as disparate as computer science, linguistics and journalism now including the technology. This pattern, however, represents a concerning danger to our educational environments, and threatens to damage not only our classroom experience, but our learning itself.

In the 2025 school year, 85% of teachers reported using AI in some form in their classroom. Among students, 86% admitted to using AI alongside their schoolwork. Proponents of AI welcome these

large numbers. Many credit it with opening up education, allowing a certain ease-of-learning to streamline the teaching process. For some teachers, AI has been credited as being invaluable in their lesson planning and grading. In many minds, the extra free time created by these shortcuts allow for increased student-teacher interactions, creating a thriving school system.

...Or at least, that's what many expect. In reality, AI use has already led to severe impediments in the learning process. Socially, it has been shown to harm student-teacher relationships — contrary to popular belief. This is because, even if more time is allotted for educators and their pupils to interact directly because of AI, its sheer presence in the classroom has been shown to nonetheless create a sense of disconnection. In one study, 50% of students described feeling less connected to teachers when an AI language model was involved in the classroom learning experience, as opposed to having a neutral or positive stance. Teachers have also described AI as impacting their relationships with students: 71% of educators say the presence of artificial intelligence, both in and out of the classroom, has created an additional burden on them, forcing them to question the legitimacy of their student's work.

The true danger of artificial intelligence, however, comes from its impact on student learning. A 2026 study by the Brookings Institution, focused on school systems from over 50 countries, found that AI in education poses the risk of undermining the core foundational development of students. Admin-



LOGOS COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

istrators often like to believe that by allowing AI as a supplemental resource to teacher instruction, they are giving an extra tool to students and educators alike. In English environments, it is often introduced as a way to automatically edit and fix students' grammar and writing. Yet students who use AI to this

end often perform worse than their peers who don't. This is because of AI use's negative feedback cycle, known as cognitive offloading. Users of AI models have increasingly shifted their thinking onto the technology, leading to a kind of cognitive atrophy commonly associated with aging brains — a concerning development for an education system that is meant to capitalize on neuroplasticity and problem solving in young learners.

Notably, the phenomenon of cognitive off-loading is not a new issue in education. Calculators have decreased reliance on mental arithmetic, and keyboards (such as the one used to write this article) have led to a reduced need for handwriting, and the partial extinction of cursive. AI, however, represents a rapid acceleration of this phenomenon, making it much more dangerous. Calculators and keyboards have been built into our education system as an end-goal short cut — the skills to complete their tasks are taught before the tools themselves are, such that students aren't reliant on their use. The same does not hold true for artificial intelligence. This has caused students who use AI to perform, on average, worse than their peers. The belief that AI is actually good for learning comes instead from the conflation that high grades must equal high learning — a concerning and false dissonance. Imagine this: Student A takes a test on arithmetic, which they didn't study for, and gets an "A-" after getting lucky on their multiple-choice questions. Happy with their grade,

they walk away. Student B fails the test initially but goes back to study and reviews their mistakes. After retaking the test, they get the same "A-" as their peer. Both results were the same, but who really learned more from the experience? Who is better set up to apply that knowledge in the future? The results of this thought experiment have already been shown to be true. A report by Oxford University found that six in ten students found AI to negatively impact the retention of the skills they learned in class. Only by learning through their own mistakes were they able to make real improvement. Yet AI too interferes with student's ability to recognize and grow from these errors. Language models are inherently sycophantic, meaning that they are prone to agreeing with the user in order to promote positive response. This system not only encourages incorrect work but leaves students uncomfortable and unwilling to be met with constructive criticism — undermining the administrative argument that AI helps students improve from their mistakes.

It is clear that the presence of AI in our learning circles is not only counter-productive, but dangerous. As the debate rages on about the ethical implications of AI's continued expansion, we must not forget the consequences of its introduction into the minds of the next generations. For the sake of our children and the futures they hold ahead of them, the message must be clear: keep the robots out of our classrooms.



Opinion

Photo of the Day | Walking down week five



UConn men's basketball takes on Georgetown in Gampel Pavilion on Feb. 14, 2026. The Huskies won 79 – 75 against the Hoyas, and celebrated Alex Karaban's program record of 116 wins. PHOTO BY ELLA GORHAM, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Your “Song of the Summer” Sucks: The downfall of modern art

by **Gianna Cassino**

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Guys, I think I just wrote the article of the summer.

Kidding. But how many times have you scrolled across TikTok “indie artists” claiming the title “song of the summer,” while near-identical melodies with lackluster lyrics blare in the background? The internet is overwhelmed with constant releases of half-baked singles, drawings and novellas for profit and fame. You’ve seen the “song of the summer” advertising format beat to death, but were any of the songs memorable whatsoever? What happened to taking time to find a unique artistic voice and create something that makes a statement?

In my recent meditations on the present state of art, I’ve noted two issues: a value of quantity over quality and a pandering to palatability over genuine artistry.

With the rise of short-form social media platforms such as TikTok, attention spans have decreased significantly. Our brains have become rewired for instant gratification: Netflix drops entire seasons of TV shows at once; artists release albums on yearly timelines. We’ve become insatiable: fast fashion, fast food and now fast media. We’re not merely accustomed to slop media, we (falsely) believe we’re satisfied by it.

Social media’s impact isn’t merely limited to consumers; it extends to artists themselves. Audiences feel entitled to consistent new releases of media, and artists feel the pressure to keep up. To create so much in such short periods of time means less time to refine and sit with one’s work.

Furthermore, creating and publicizing art has become infinitely more accessible in our digital age. Anyone can self-publish books, produce entire albums in their bedrooms, or post paintings for the world to see. Social media has catapulted authentic artists like Chappell Roan into stardom, and it would be an oversight not to acknowledge the benefits it can bring to those with genuine passion for their craft. The problem, rather, comes from the oversaturation of new “artists” ripping off the same singers and authors in an attempt to grab their fifteen minutes of fame. Their content comes out of a hunger to be seen, rather than to create.

By now, artists have learned that the masses accept dumbed-down content. BookTok, once a virtual forum to discuss classic

and modern literature alike, has become supersaturated with up-and-coming “authors” mashing together popular tropes instead of creating a story or a statement. It’s become less about making art that speaks to oneself as an artist and to a target audience and more of analytics – how many viewers/readers/streams can you get? Talented artists are losing out to good businesspeople. In simple terms, art doesn’t have to be good for the masses to consume it anymore, so what’s the point in putting in as much effort?

Case in point: we’ve all (unfortunately) had time to sit with Taylor Swift’s latest album, *The Life of a Showgirl*. Pop princess Swift has taken to releasing full albums less than a year apart, and quite frankly, the quality is laughable. As a former diehard folklore and evermore fan, I can’t even stomach her latest releases because they lack intention, passion, and anything closely resembling a statement.

So, what’s the solution to slop art? First, a quick philosophy lesson:

In philosopher Martin Heidegger’s *Discourse on Thinking*, he establishes two schools of thought: calculative thinking and meditative thinking. Calculative thinking is unconscious, computing “more economical possibilities. . . rac[ing] from one prospect to the next” (Heidegger). In this case, calculative thinking is making art for a profit, usually categorized by the reappearance of formulaic tropes that have proven to do well with the general public. Meditative thinking, on the other hand, is “above” our typical step-by-step formula of thought. It is at once myopic and overarching, focusing on minor details and the big picture simultaneously. This is the kind of thinking that produces masterpieces. While Heidegger’s political views are frankly disgusting, his approach to thought is worth some consideration. Since meditative thinking is increasingly difficult due to shortened attention spans and a penchant for instant gratification, it’s increasingly rare and we’re seeing less quality art.

I believe that a return to meditative thinking can lead to a renaissance of genuine art. Logging off and taking time to sit with your own thoughts unlocks a wealth of creativity. It sounds silly, but I’ve gotten my best ideas not from scrolling for inspiration but from staring out a window and letting my mind wander. Meditative thinking is an innate ability, it just takes effort to tap into. As a child, you probably drew pictures or made up dance



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

routines or created short films purely for fun. Making art is as simple as returning to that state of mind.

Note that by “good art,” I’m not demanding everyone to create the Mona Lisa. “Good art” can be a campy short film, a literary masterpiece, a one-minute orchestral composition, whatever! For art to be good, it merely has to come from a place of genuine passion and have something to say. I am of the strong belief that now more than ever, we need authentic music, literature, visual art and more that make statements, not slop.

So, if you’re passionate about your art, make sure it feels like you. Put it out there or don’t, just make art for art’s sake! Even if (especially if) it’s weird or “unpalatable” or niche. Authenticity is all you need.

SPORTS SPECTRUM: THE 2026 ALL-STAR GAME WAS ALRIGHT

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After the sour taste of the entire event last year, serious questions were asked regarding the future of the All-Star Game and whether it was going to be a staple. Some fans even wished to do away with the format. However, a lot has changed in the year since in format, faces and location.

The Empty Arena Paradox

The 2026 Rising Stars tournament was held on Friday, featuring top rookies and sophomores, such as former Big 12 Freshman of the Year VJ Edgecombe, and a reunion in competition of the 2024 National Championship team: Donovan Clingan, Tristen Newton, Cam Spencer, and Rising Stars MVP of the previous year, Stephon Castle. With notable G League talent being involved in the competition, there was ample room for them to display their talent.

Then why, many wondered, was the arena reported to be over 95% empty?

The weekend was hosted at the Los Angeles Clippers' home arena, the Intuit Dome, which caused prices to skyrocket. SeatGeek reported that prices for the entire weekend jumped near 50%. This makes the accessibility even worse than it was last year.

Often, a popular sentiment people like to throw out regarding these games is that people simply do not care and that there are better things to be doing in Los Angeles on a Friday night — but how can fans care if it costs \$2,000 to see all of this young talent in person?

3-point and Skills Contest

Many critics believe that the removal of the skills challenge was a result of Victor Wembanyama and now former NBA veteran Chris Paul effectively cheating. No matter how funny the display was, it might have been the nail in the coffin for the contest as a whole, which was replaced by the Shooting Stars contest — a team-based event featuring current stars and former legends.

On the other hand, there was definitely some confusion in regard to the announcement of Damian Lillard participating in the 3-point contest, as the star had injured himself in the postseason prior. However, he joined Larry Bird and Craig Hodges as the only three-time winners in NBA history.

The media conversation: What counts as trying?

This year, media conversations around the All-Star Game sang its praises. As opposed to negative sentiment from the game last year, many praised it despite initial skepticism of the format. Some say that the game was needed, with high praise from the New York Times' Athletic NBA Staff.

With the only real sour spot of the evening being the dunk contest, which has, more or less, begun to phase out of relevancy with stars not performing, a question comes to mind—is this what it looks like when players try?

Wembanyama, an up-and-coming basketball player, has promised to “deliver” on hopes of being the new face of the league. Generational talent aside, he, many agreed, was the sole saving grace of the weekend.

“I ain't gonna lie,” Anthony Edwards, All-Star Game MVP said, “Wemby set the tone. He came out playing hard. Hard not to match that.”

Wembanyama may have been on the team that lost, appearing to be visibly frustrated afterwards, but his passion for the game is undeniable, and in his own words, “It's a game I personally cherish — so being competitive is the least I can do.”

Conclusion: better than last year

The attitude around this year's All-Star Game was more positive than the year before, perhaps having to do with the slow phasing out of the NBA on TNT crew alongside more positive-toned conversations around the game from the NBA-on-NBA crew and NBA on Amazon Prime.

A lot of the news around the weekend has little to do with the content of the game itself. However, there are always opportunities for growth — the next apparent being the cost and price of the fan experience.

ELLIOT'S WEEKLY TIP-OFF: ONE MONTH AWAY FROM MADNESS

by Elliot Koplas
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We are officially one month away from the start of March Madness, but with this week's slate, madness might erupt early.

Last week saw every top 16 team shift in the rankings somehow.

Previously No. 1 Arizona lost their first two games of the season. First on the road to No. 9 Kansas, and then home against No. 16 Texas Tech in overtime. Their schedule continues to challenge them with a game against No. 24 BYU on Feb. 18, followed by No. 2 Houston on Feb. 21. Arizona has finally shown weakness, and teams are taking advantage of it.

How will the previous top team respond to the losses, and will they be able to rebound with the tough schedule ahead?

Current No. 1 Michigan has a tough top 5 matchup on Feb. 21 against No. 3 Duke. The Blue Devils are coming off a win against ranked Clemson responding well after their heartbreak in Chapel Hill last week.

No. 20 Arkansas will visit No. 25 Alabama for their first ranked SEC opponent since mid-January. The Razorbacks sit second in the conference with The Tide in a close third. Arkansas is 4-4 against ranked opponents this season, and the Crimson Tide are 2-5.

Both teams wish they could be higher in the rankings with the opportunity to highlight their skills and get back on track before March.

Miami (OH) moved up another spot this week still holding the only undefeated record in the country. They take on Bowling Green on

Feb. 20, only beating them by 10 during their last matchup.

No. 7 Purdue hosts Indiana in a key rematch. Indiana spoiled Purdue last time the two programs met, beating them 72-67 at home. The Boilermakers will hope to get some payback and hold their top 10 ranking.

looking to bounce back after their loss to No. 5 Iowa State. This was following their huge win at home taking down No. 1 Arizona. Their visit to Iowa State ended in an 18-point defeat.

The Jayhawks can rebound with this win as they must prepare for both No. 2 Hous-

win against No. 1 Arizona last week. Although Kansas State has struggled and sits at the bottom of the Big 12, we are approaching March and miracles can happen.

The nightcap for the Big 12 has No. 6 Iowa State against No. 23 BYU in a showdown of top ranked teams. Iowa State got their groove back dominating Kansas last week after their loss to a weak TCU side. With a tough end of the schedule still to come, their time to get hot could not be better as they look to make a deep run next month.

In the ACC, No. 14 Virginia hosts UMiami in a battle of hot teams. The Hurricanes are on a streak defeating No. 11 North Carolina last week, holding an impressive 20-5 record on the season. Looking to take down another ranked ACC opponent, they will travel to Virginia in hopes of moving into the top 25.

In the SEC, No. 19 Vanderbilt will host Tennessee after they slipped out of the top 25. Still a dangerous team to face, the Volunteers have beaten Alabama, Louisville and Houston who were all ranked when they faced off. The two programs will end the season in Knoxville against one another, but as coaches always say, the most important game is the next one.

This week highlights top programs taking the hard-court and going all out to win these games. With all sorts of drama shaking up the rankings last week, teams continue to prepare for the postseason.

Every team is showing some weakness; it is hard to say who will cut down the nets this year.

Teams will have the next few weeks to clean up and make their run for one shining moment.



UConn men's basketball takes on Georgetown in Gampel Pavilion on Feb. 14, 2026. The Huskies won 79 - 75 against the Hoyas, and celebrated Alex Karaban's program record of 116 wins.
PHOTO BY ELLA GORHAM, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

On Feb. 21, the Big 12 will display some key matchups which could shake up their conference rankings.

No. 8 Kansas will host Cincinnati in a daytime showdown with the Jayhawks

and No. 4 Arizona again next week. The tough schedule should help them eventually prepare for the Big 12 tournament and for March.

No. 13 Texas Tech will face Kansas State after their big

WILKER'S WEEKLY: PATRIOTS OFFSEASON PREVIEW

by Graham Wilker
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The New England Patriots lost their eighth Super Bowl this season with a score of 29-13 against the Seattle Seahawks. While heart breaking, they made it so far and fell short; the team's future is among the brightest in the entire NFL.

The vast majority of the Patriots' core is still very young. Drake Maye, TreVeyon Henderson, Milton Williams, Christian Barmore, Christian Gonzalez and Craig Woodson are all 26 or younger, as is Will Campbell if he can bounce back in 2026. They've set a high floor at 14-3, but there's no doubt the team has the potential to win a Lombardi.

The Patriots are tenth in effective cap space and have 12 draft picks in 2026. After spending by far the most of any team in free agency last season, a more modest spending year could be in order. Back in 2021, the Patriots were first in free agency spending, just as they were last offseason. In 2022, they ranked 30th, spending less than \$28 million, after a 10-7 season. Of the nearly \$300 million spent in total contracts in 2021, 51.7% was guaranteed at signing. They spent 22.8% more in total contracts in 2025 relative to 2021, but similarly, 48% was guaranteed at signing. Another massive spending bout this offseason would no doubt improve the roster, but it may not be feasible for the Krafts, who seem to stagger their spending. Since Tom Brady's departure in 2020, the Patriots have been 28th, 1st, 30th, 14th, 13th, and 1st in free agency spending. On average, that's puts them in 14.5th place in spending despite a pair of bottom-5 finishes and first place finishes.

If New England is to be more modest this offseason, I'd expect re-signing '25

contributors and bringing in budget options might be a priority. Thayer Munford, Khyiris Tonga and Jack Gibbens will all cost very little despite having sizable roles down the stretch. Players like K'Lavon Chiasson and Jaylinn Hawkins have earned themselves a bigger market, and while neither is likely to see lucrative deals, the \$10-12 and \$7-9 million ranges seem

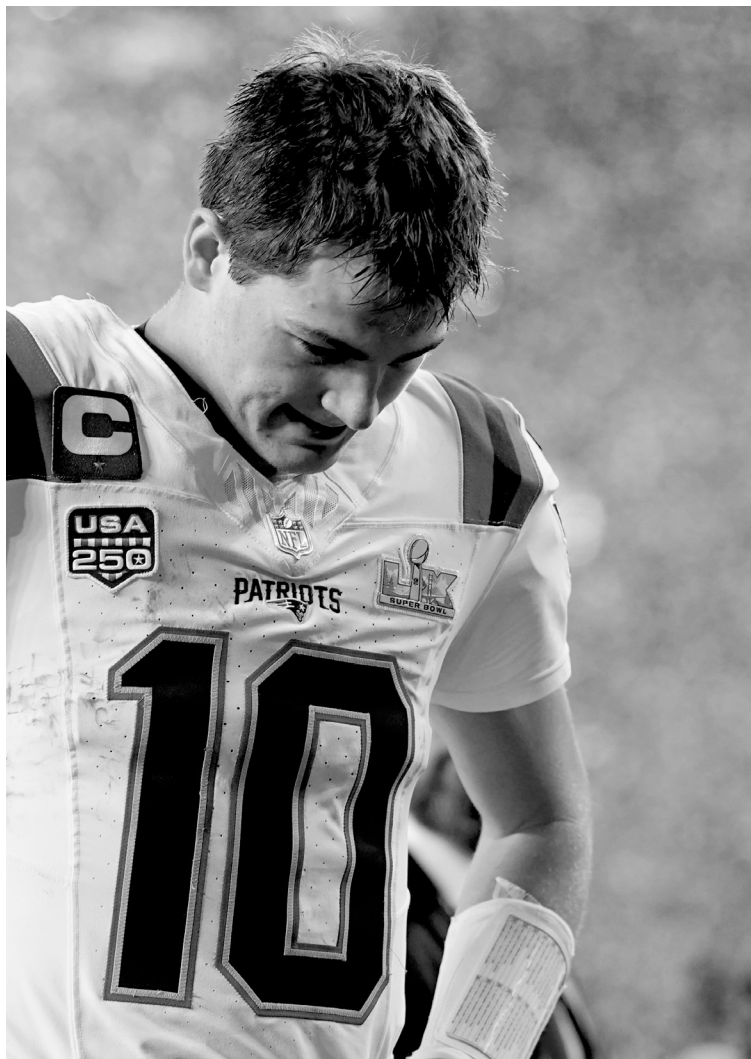
all but two games with a torn Achilles this season but would offer an experienced third back behind Henderson and Rhamondre Stevenson should the team release Antonio Gibson. Mike Vrabel's defense thrived with three safeties on the field in Tennessee, so bringing in Belton regardless of Hawkins' future could be a move to help add depth and bring a Tennessee ele-

Elgton Jenkins and Rashan Gary. While less likely, Giants nose tackle Dexter Lawrence's name has been tossed around as a cap casualty as well.

If New England is to make a big swing in free agency, there are candidates. Aside from the aforementioned cut candidates, A.J. Brown and George Pickens (franchise tag likely) could be trade candidates on the offensive side of the ball. Maxx Crosby has been named in trade talks, while it's been rumored the Bengals will opt not to use the franchise tag on Trey Hendrickson. Any of these moves will be costly, in terms of finances and potentially draft picks, but none of them are out of the question.

The final big money move the Patriots could make would be to retain one of their own. For the first time in his career, Christian Gonzalez is eligible for a contract extension. His Super Bowl performance was arguably the best game of his career, and his playoff performances across the postseason were something to behold. He's become the highest paid cornerback in football with an extension, eclipsing Sauce Gardner's four-year, \$120.4 million deal. It seems a real possibility Gonzalez will become the first cornerback to hit the \$31 million per year mark, thus one-upping Williams as the highest paid Patriot of all-time.

All-in-all, the Patriots have the opportunity to take some big swings this offseason to improve their squad. Already one of the most promising young teams in the NFL, it's incredibly encouraging to see them have the resources to acquire a top receiver or edge defender. If New England wants to return to the Super Bowl in 2027, they'll need to make some major upgrades to the roster, and in the coming months, we'll see exactly what those upgrades are.



New England Patriots players walk off the field after a loss to the Seattle Seahawks in the NFL Super Bowl football game on Sunday, Feb. 8, 2026, in Santa Clara, Calif.
PHOTO COURTESY OF AP PHOTO/JULIO GORTIZ

reasonable for each respective player.

Players like Chargers running back Najee Harris and Giants safety Dane Belton could be an excellent budget finds for New England in free agency. Harris missed

ment to New England.

The Patriots could also look to players who have been or could be released by their teams as cap casualties. The Dolphins released Tyreek Hill and Bradley Chubb on Monday, while the Packers have been rumored to cut

Sports

Photo of the Day | Women's Basketball



The UConn Huskies playing against the Creighton Bluejays at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies won with a final score of 94-44.
PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WOMEN'S SWIM AND DIVE: HUSKIES HEAD SOUTH FOR BIG EAST TOURNAMENT

by Meredith Lloyd
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The UConn Huskies are set to travel to Ocala, Fla. this weekend, to compete in the Big East Conference Tournament. This week, the Huskies will face six conference opponents in Butler, Georgetown, Providence, Seton Hall, Villanova and Xavier.

The Huskies had a strong showing at last year's tournament, taking second place overall with a team score of 1,516. Looking to build on that finish, this year's UConn team has surged as the postseason approaches.

The divers had an especially notable run last year - UConn swept the top spots for the 1-meter dive. Olivia Denery took first place (290.45), while Kate Cooper (285.45), Darah Ostrom (280.05) and Julia Pioso (273.20) followed closely. Cooper also finished first overall in the 3-meter dive with a personal best score of 327.35. The Husky divers have put together an incredible season, proving to be tough competition at every meet. They will look to defend their titles this week and repeat their dominant team performance.

UConn's sophomore breast-

roke standout, Sydney Perkins, has a title of her own to defend. As a freshman, she took first place in the 200-yard breaststroke (2:12.52). She remains undefeated in the event in dual meet competition this season. Jessica Sheng, another UConn sophomore, closed out the previous Big East Championships with second place finishes in the 50-yard freestyle (22.67), 100-yard freestyle (49.39) and 100-yard backstroke (54.09). She will enter the championships on a winning streak in the 100-yard freestyle. Combined with her impressive relay contributions, Sheng is an athlete that opposing teams will have to account for.

The defending Big East champion Villanova Wildcats are expected to be the toughest competition. At last year's Big East Championship, Villanova pulled ahead to defeat the Huskies with a 1,588-1,516 margin. Earlier this season, the two teams met again, and the Wildcats came out on top.

Several other Big East swimmers made noise at last year's finals. Senior Allie Wagonner, Seton Hall distance swimmer, was one of the top performers of the night, boosting the Pirates' team score with an impressive sweep in the 1650-yard free-

style, 500-yard freestyle and 400-yard individual medley. From Xavier, senior Olivia Oyster will challenge the top sprinters as the current title holder in the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle.

The relay events will be among the most anticipated races of the week. The 200-yard freestyle relay was one of last year's most pivotal races. The Wildcats, led by Carlotta Colomer, Riley Kudlac, Lainey Quinones and Lexi Elkovitch, claimed the top spot (1:31.29). Xavier and UConn put up a tight race for second and third place, but the Musketeers pulled ahead with a 0.04-second margin. Both Xavier (1:31.74) and UConn (1:31.77) set program records in the event.

The 200-yard medley relay is another matchup to watch, and the Huskies are entering with momentum after setting two pool records and dropping time in recent meets. Xavier holds the reigning title in this event, with Georgetown just 0.07 seconds short, but the Huskies are ready to contend for the win.

The meet will begin Wednesday at 1 p.m. with diving preliminaries, and the women's competition concludes Friday. All competitions will be held at Florida Aquatics Swimming and Training.



The UConn swim and dive team celebrating their annual senior night. Friends and family packed the Natatorium to cheer on the Huskies.
PHOTO BY ALEX RENZULLI, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THE PUCK DROP: ALL IN THE FAMILY - THE HUGHES' GO FOR GOLD

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It's not every day that a professional athlete gets to play alongside a sibling, whether that be in the NHL or the NBA.

It's even a rarer occasion for an athlete to participate in the Olympics with their sibling.

In this year's Winter Olympics, both the New Jersey Devils' Jack and the Minnesota Wild's Quinn Hughes are both playing for the United States Men's Hockey team in this year's Winter Olympic games.

However, they are also joined by an individual who helped shape their hockey career. Their mom, Ellen Hughes.

E. Hughes will be working with the USA Women's Hockey team for the Olympics, working as a player development coach.

"Never in a million years did I think that I would be in Italy and have the opportunity to be a part of the women's Olympic team. And then to have two sons there, you just count your blessings," E. Hughes said in an article from the New York Times. "It's a blessing... and hope for a lot of wins."

Both the men's and wom-

en's squads have each had their fair share of success in this year's Olympics.

The women's team will head to the gold medal game scheduled on Feb. 19, where they will take on Team Canada. Puck drops Thursday at 1:10 p.m. It should be a fun one for fans to watch, as United States defeated Canada 5-0 in the preliminary rounds.

As for the men's crew, they just completed their preliminary round of games, finishing with a 5-1 win against Germany on Sunday.

Q. Hughes finished this round, racking up four assists in three games played. His brother, J. Hughes, drew up a goal and two assists.

"The best part for me is being here with Quinn. We're lucky that we get to share our first Olympics with our mom, too. Who gets to say that? It's pretty special." J. Hughes said in an article from NHL.com.

Both brothers are relishing this time with one another, after not being able to play together in the Four Nations faceoff tournament last year. Despite J. Hughes playing for his country, Q. Hughes could not due to an oblique injury.

With both Hughes brothers and more talented players, like Auston Matthews and Brady Tkachuk, at the

squad's disposal, Head Coach Mike Sullivan is satisfied with his roster.

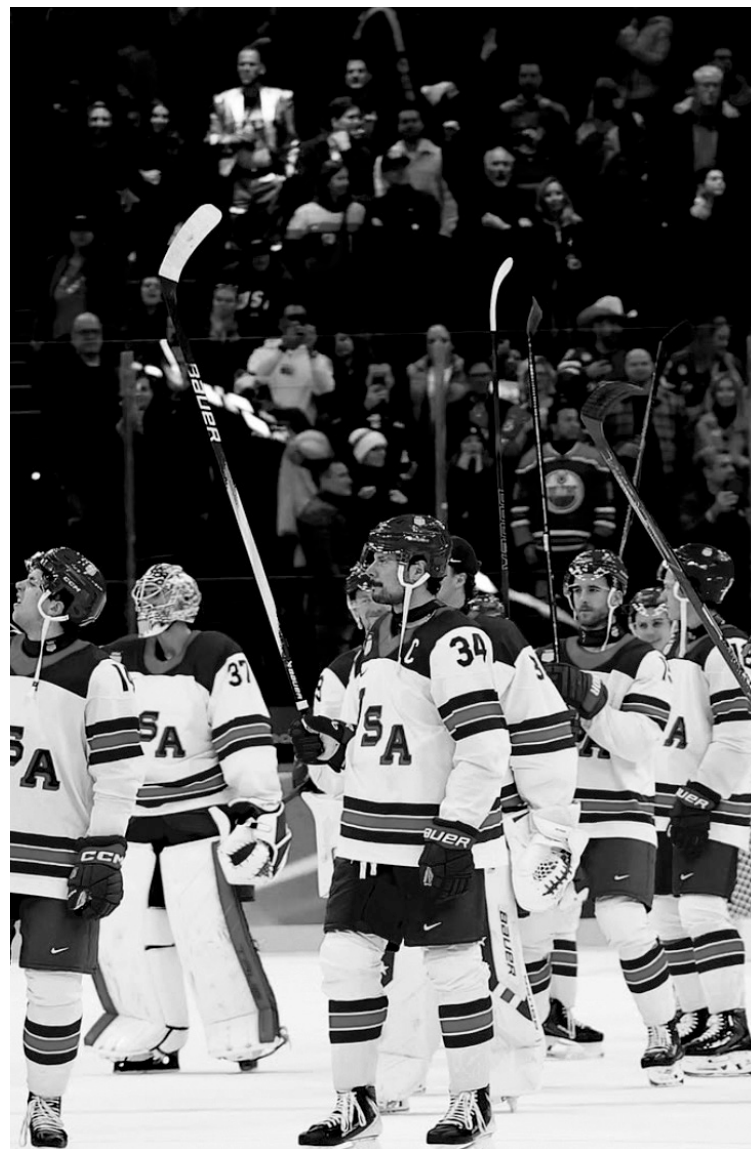
Sullivan described Q. Hughes as a "gamechanger" in an article from NHL.com and elaborated more on his integral style of play on the blue line.

"He defends so well with his mobility and his stick, and you watch him both 5-on-5 and on the power play and how dynamic he is, whether it be with our transition game or jumping off the offensive blue, he's a unique player, and so to have him as part of the group this year, I think, is a huge boost for us." Sullivan said to NHL.com.

As for J. Hughes, Sullivan attributed his attitude as one of his best traits the forward brings to the ice.

"He's amongst the very best, and that in and of itself is an incredible honor. To be in the conversation to make this roster is extremely difficult when you look at the amount of talent that the United States has developed and can play at this level." Sullivan said to NHL.com.

The men's team will shift their focus to going for gold. They are set to take on an opponent to be determined for the quarter-final game on Wednesday, with a puck drop scheduled for 3:10 p.m.



The USA men's hockey team competing at the 2026 Winter Olympics. The team finished the group round undefeated, earning a spot in the quarterfinals.
PHOTO COURTESY OF @USAHOCCY ON INSTAGRAM

HUSKIES IN THE PROS:

BREAKING DOWN THE HUSKIES' MID-SEASON UNRIVALED PERFORMANCES

by **Tyler Pruneau**
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Paige Bueckers:
 Midway through her first year playing for the Breeze in the Unrivaled league, Bueckers continues to perform outstandingly.

Through 10 games of the 2026 campaign, the former Husky tops the team with 25 points, nearly seven assists and just under a steal per meeting. Not to mention, the guard snags almost 6.5 rebounds per contest, which is the third most amongst the squad.

Currently, the Minnesota native is on a seven-game streak of scoring 20-plus points.

In recent weeks, Bueckers participated in the one-on-one tournament. In the First Round, the rookie defeated Kate Martin 12-5 and went on to beat Arike Ogunbowale 12-4 in the Second Round.

Heading into the Quarterfinals, the 24-year-old hit the end of the road as she fell to Chelsea Gray 11-2.

In upcoming events, it was announced on Wednesday that Bueckers will represent the United States at the 2026 FIBA Women's World Cup Qualifying Tournament in San Juan.

The Breeze faced the Lunar Owls last night and will take on the Vinyl on Saturday, Feb. 21, at 8 p.m. Fans can watch the clash on truTV.

Breanna Stewart:
 Similar to Bueckers, Stewart has produced incredible performances. In the Mist's most recent 90-64 victory over the Rose, the veteran notched a double-double.

Within about 17 minutes, the forward dropped 16 points,

grabbed 11 boards and dished out four assists. From the field, the former Husky banked four of seven (57.1%) shots, buried one of three (33.3%) three-pointers and went three-for-three from the free-throw line.

In the one-on-one tournament, the 31-year-old escaped the First Round with an 11-6 win versus Li Yueru. However, Stewart's momentum was cut short by Aliyah Boston. In the Second Round, Boston handed the New York native an 11-7 loss.

With three bouts remaining in the 2026 regular season, the Mist will battle the Lunar Owls on Saturday, Feb. 21, on truTV. Tipoff is scheduled for 9:15 p.m.

Outside of Stewart's Unrivaled success, it was announced yesterday that she will rejoin the Fenerbahce ahead of the EuroLeague Final Six between April 15-19. The last time "Stewie" played in the Euros was in 2023.

Aaliyah Edwards:
 In Edwards' first contest back since missing two outings due to UConn inducting her into the Huskies of Honor on Jan. 28, the former Husky did not disappoint.

Paving the way, the forward posted a double-double against the Laces. Within 21 minutes, the Canadian native recorded 28 points, 18 rebounds and an assist.

The 23-year-old thrived from the floor, splashing 11 of 17 (64.7%) shots and connecting on three of four (75%) free throws.

It is worth noting that this is her best performance since accumulating 38 points and 13 rebounds while facing the Laces on Jan. 12.

Alongside Bueckers and Stewart, Edwards also participated in

the 2026 one-on-one tournament.

In the First Round, Dominique Malonga fell to the second-year player 11-8. To end the Second Round, Edwards secured a close 11-9 triumph over Shakira Austin.

In the Quarterfinals, things took a turn for the worse as Boston shut out Edwards 12-0.

After a two-week break, the Lunar Owls faced the Breeze last night and will clash with the Mist on Saturday, Feb. 21. Tipoff is scheduled for 9:15 on truTV.

Azurà Stevens:
 After starting hot, averaging slightly over 15 points in the Hive's first four matches, Stevens has not only declined in points but also in minutes.

The last time the forward took the court was against the Lunar Owls on Jan. 30. By the end of the meeting, the veteran registered just a point within a little more than three minutes.

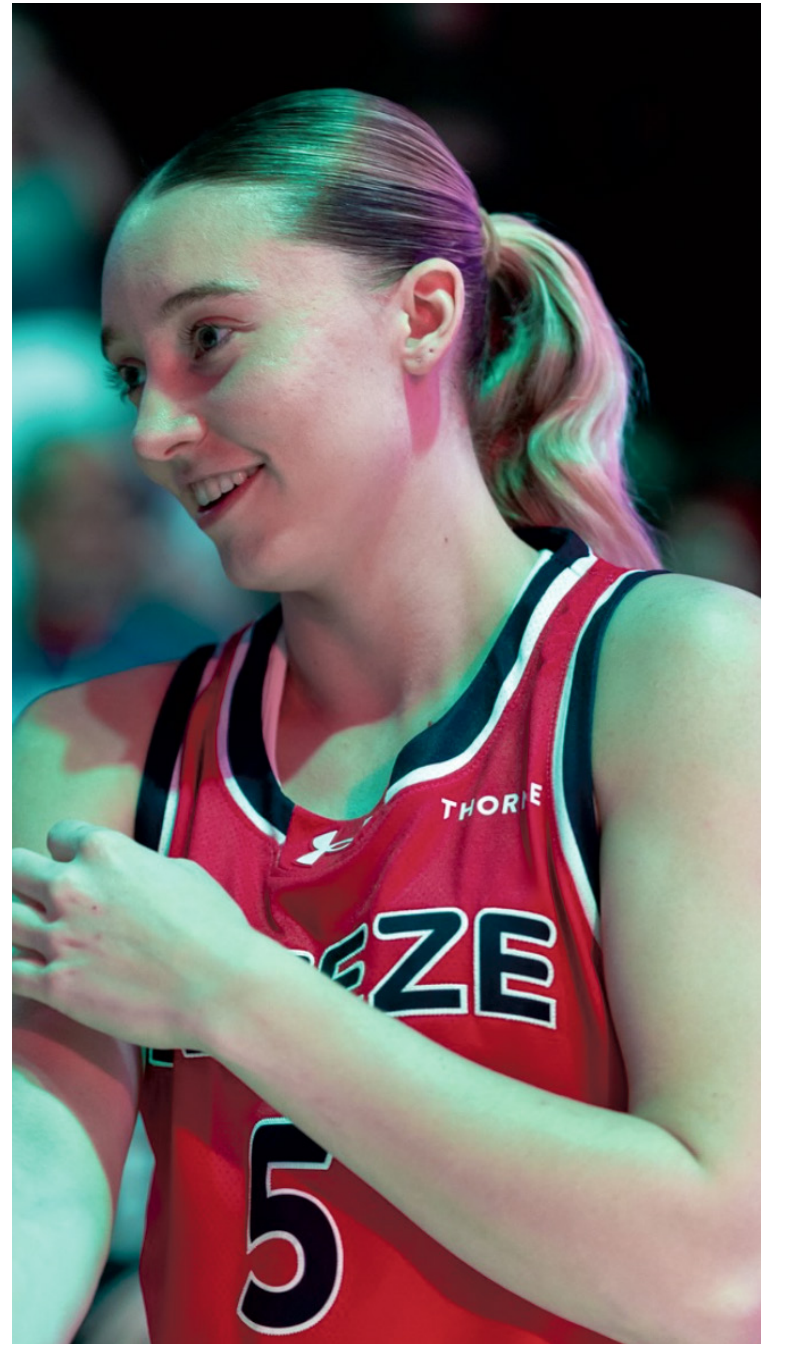
The 30-year-old struggled from all ranges, botching a pair of field goals and a shot from beyond the arc. Her lone point came from the free-throw line.

The Hive took on the Laces last night and will play the Rose on Friday, Feb. 20, on truTV, at 8:45 p.m.

Tiffany Hayes:
 To begin February, Hayes has experienced a cold phase as she only posted a combined total of 10 points in the Phantom's previous two games.

Compared to the last four matchups of January, the guard averaged just under 15 points per outing.

The Phantom will face the Laces on Friday, Feb. 20, on truTV, at 7:30 p.m.



Paige Bueckers, a former UConn athlete who is now currently playing for the Breeze Basketball Club. Paige has been dominating the pro leagues, continuing her legacy from UConn. PHOTOS COURTESY OF @BREEZEBASKETBALLCLUB ON INSTAGRAM

SAM'S SECTION:

EMEKA OKAFOR BECOMES THIRD HUSKY TO HAVE JERSEY NUMBER RETIRED

by **Sam Calhoun**
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Just days after Hasheem Thabeet was inducted into the Huskies of Honor, another all-time great will be honored.

Emeka Okafor, one of the greatest players in program history, will have his jersey number (No. 50) retired, joining Ray Allen (No. 34) and Richard "Rip" Hamilton (No. 32) as the only players in UConn men's basketball history to have their jersey number retired.

"It shows that he's one of the foundations on which the program was built," Joe D'Ambrosio, the former radio voice of the team from 1992 to 2018, said. "With Emeka having his jersey retired, I think it's proof of his legacy and the fact that he was among the greatest UConn players of all time."

What Okafor did in his three seasons at UConn remains unmatched. He holds career records for most blocked shots (441, 4.3 per game). He averaged a double-double for his career with 13.8 points and 10.8 rebounds per game. Only five other Huskies have averaged a double-double for their career, all of which came before 1971. One of his most impressive efforts came at Villanova, when he blocked Randy Foye's shot to seal a victory in overtime.

He is the only player to be named a National Player of the Year, sharing the 2004 NABC Player of the Year honor with Saint Joseph's Jameer Nelson. During that season, Okafor averaged 17.6 points, 11.5 rebounds and 4.1 blocks

per game on 59.9% shooting, all while dealing with back spasms throughout the season. That season still holds program records to this day, including most double-doubles (24), most blocked shots in a single game (10, tied with Thabeet and Donyell Marshall) and the most rebounds in Big East play (22, also most rebounds in a Hartford game).

"He was such a complete player," UConn general manager Tom Moore, an assistant coach at the time, said. "He kept the shot blocking; he kept the defensive rebounding. He was good in transition with running, but now he added a very reliable low-post game too, and he could get fouled now. He was a monster as a junior."

Okafor's All-American season helped the Huskies win the Big East Tournament and eventually the program's second national championship. He was named the 2004 Final Four Most Outstanding Player, with a career performance against Duke in the national semifinal.

"He picks up the two fouls early, and he's like apoplectic," Moore said. "We were up about eight or nine when he got the fouls, and then we were down about nine or so at halftime. So, it was close to a 20-point swing with him out of there. But he was so dominant in the second half on both ends. I think he fouled out their whole frontcourt and then just sort of took over the game."

Okafor is arguably the greatest defensive player in program history. Like Thabeet, Okafor was also named

the NABC Defensive Player of the Year in back-to-back seasons (2002-03, 2003-04). His 156 blocks in the 2002-03 season still stand as a program record, as well as averaging 4.7 blocks per game.

"He had an amazing sense of timing," said D'Ambrosio, who will emcee the ceremony. "His timing to block shots was terrific on the college level. I would put it equivalent to what Bill Russell's shot blocking was like in the pros."

The Bellaire, Texas native made an instant impact once arriving in Storrs, starting on the 2001-02 team that ended up winning the Big East regular season title and the Big East Tournament. Despite being named to the All-Big East Third Team, Okafor was not the star of the team then; that title belonged to Caron Butler. That team ended up making the Elite Eight, losing to eventual champion Maryland.

"[He] never looked out of place," D'Ambrosio said. "He always looked like he understood what was expected of him, and he did that to the best of his ability every time he stepped on the floor."

The next season saw him named to the All-Big East First Team while also having one of the best defensive seasons in program history. The Huskies won their division in the Big East and made it to the Sweet Sixteen, falling to Texas.

However, his presence on the court is not the only impact he had at UConn. He is considered the most academically gifted player the program has ever seen. He was a two-time CoSIDA Academic



LOGO BY SAMANTHA HASS, ARTIST EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

All-American and was the Academic All-American of the Year during the 2003-04 season.

Shamon Tooles, who will be in attendance for the ceremony, said, "He's probably the smartest player we ever played with. After practices, he would essentially be in the study hall for the remainder of the evening."

In April, Okafor will be inducted into the UConn Business Hall of Fame. He graduated from the University of Connecticut in two and a half years and finished with a 3.8 GPA.

"If he had 15 minutes with a bus getting delayed a little bit, he might go finish an academic assignment," Moore said. "He was as locked in and regimented as any great young player that I've ever

been around with his time management skills."

He became the highest NBA draft selection in program history (later matched by Thabeet), being taken by the Charlotte Bobcats with the No. 2 pick in the 2004 NBA Draft. That rookie season was stellar for him, as he was named the 2005 NBA Rookie of the Year. He had a 10-year career in the league, also playing for the New Orleans Hornets and Pelicans as well as the Washington Wizards.

Now, Okafor is an analyst in college basketball, appearing on ESPN, Fox Sports and CBS Sports already.

Okafor will see his jersey number hang from the rafters as the Huskies host Creighton on Wednesday night at the Harry A. Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn.



Sports

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:

NO. 1 HUSKIES SET SIGHTS ON MIDWEEK MATCHUP VERSUS VILLANOVA

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been catalysts for the Huskies all season long and have been given their flowers.

game and shooting 66.7% from beyond the arc last week.

Late-Season team Tuesday evening, averaging 19.2 and 17.8 points per game, respec-

times, the most recent being Paige Bueckers in 2021.

As far as their conference bout against Villanova on Wednesday, Connecticut should look out for 5-foot-7 guard Jasmine Bascoe, who has averaged 18.1 points game, sitting at No. 2 below Strong in the Big East for points per game average.

The last time these two foes faced one another was on Jan. 15 of this year, where Connecticut took the win 99-50. In this matchup, the Huskies held Bascoe to just eight points and forced the guard to turn the ball over three times.

The key to staying undefeated in conference play for the Huskies is to stay persistent on the defensive end by forcing as many turnovers as possible and setting a fast pace upon tipoff.

As far as injuries go for Connecticut, redshirt junior Ice Brady will miss the remainder of the 2025-26 season after undergoing successful surgery on her knee on Monday. Blanca Quiñonez, who has missed some time due to a shoulder injury, will most likely be back on Wednesday, per Daniel Connolly of the UConn blog.

Tip-off between the Wildcats and Huskies is scheduled for 7 p.m. at Finneran Pavilion in Villanova, Pa. Husky fans can tune in to the game broadcast on Peacock.

After sliding past the Marquette Golden Eagles 71-56 on Saturday afternoon, the top-ranked Huskies (27-0, 16-0) are gearing up to take on the No. 2 squad in the Big East conference against the Villanova Wildcats (21-5, 14-3) Wednesday evening.

While UConn took the win on Saturday afternoon, it broke their 21-game-long streak of winning games by over 25 points. The Huskies kicked off the game by struggling to match the fast tempo set by Marquette. However, graduate guard Azzi Fudd helped her program change the tide of the game.

Fudd finished the conference matchup with 25 points, shooting a perfect 50% from the field.

"They came in super aggressive on top of their stuff. I mean, their defense, their offense, their crashing the boards. They had every hustle play, and we needed to wake up," Fudd said post-game to the broadcasters on FS1.

At halftime, the Huskies led 36-24 and sophomore Sarah Strong took it upon herself to keep that lead, and at one point, scored 17 consecutive points in a row for her squad. Both Fudd and Strong have



The UConn Huskies playing against the Creighton Bluejays at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies won with a final score of 94-44.
PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Fudd was named the Big East Player of the Week after averaging 22.0 points per

Strong and Fudd were also named to the 2026 Naismith Trophy Player of the Year

tively. The Huskies have had seven players win this award 11

MEN'S BASKETBALL:

NO. 5 UCONN HOSTS STRUGGLING CREIGHTON ON WEDNESDAY NIGHT

by **Sam Calhoun**
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Wednesday night is expected to be a special one for the UConn men's basketball team. It also serves as an opportunity for the fanbase to bring the noise.

After Saturday night's win over Georgetown, Dan Hurley expressed his frustration with the atmosphere at Harry A. Gampel Pavilion and PeoplesBank Arena.

There are a ton of reasons why the fifth-ranked Huskies (24-2, 14-1 Big East) can expect a more raucous environment as they host the Creighton Bluejays (13-13, 7-8 Big East) at Gampel Pavilion.

UConn has many promotions for this game: white-out, \$2 Miller Lites, free t-shirts and Emeka Okafor's jersey number retirement, the latter of which also includes posters handed out for the jersey number retirement.

The athletic department has also played a key role in helping the student section. In a Top Dogs email sent out to students on Monday night, students are now able to transfer student tickets to other students if unable to attend. While there is a concern for reselling tickets, there is an attempt to make the atmosphere rocking. There were also 150 more student tickets for the Creighton game that dropped at 8 p.m. Monday.

UConn came close to losing against Georgetown on Saturday, with the bench production being an issue once again.

"I feel like probably one of the easiest parts of my job is doling out minutes with players. If you're hurting a team over a stretch of multiple possessions — offense, defense — I'm going to get you off the court," Hurley said. "We need the bench guys to step up so I could play them more...At times [this year], the bench has been the strength."

That was not the case the last time these two teams met. UConn had its most complete performance in Big East play, defeating Creighton 85-58. The Huskies had 20 bench points and connected on 16 3-pointers, with Braylon Mullins leading the way with 16 points.

However, Tarris Reed Jr. was not as impactful in that game,

on Saturday. "But to get three rebounds from the center position, that (expletive) didn't happen when it was Adama [Sanogo]-Donovan [Clingan]. It just didn't (expletive) happen."

Silas Demary Jr. has looked great lately. The Georgia transfer nearly had his second triple-double of the season, finishing the game with 15 points, 12 rebounds

However, no one has been more impactful in the past two games than Solo Ball, who was named the Big East Player of the Week. After his shooting splits became a concern, he scored at least 20 points against Butler and Georgetown, with the latter game including 16 of his 20 points coming in the first half. With the final few weeks of the regular season

much attention he draws. So, for him to be playing this type of basketball right now, this late in the season, is incredible, and I know he'll continue."

Connecticut's defense has taken a dip recently, now considered a fringe top-10 team on that end of the floor, according to KenPom. The missing piece, according to Hurley, is a wing defender.

"This team doesn't start a guy who identifies as a shutdown wing defender," Hurley said, noting that the 2022-23 team had Andre Jackson Jr. and the 2023-24 team had Stephon Castle. "We need those guys [on the wing] to play good defense."

Creighton is in the middle of a down-year, losing key pieces, including Ryan Kalkbrenner from last season and Jackson McAndrew, out for the year with a foot injury. Creighton has lost five of its last six games.

"I don't think there's anyone that you ever have more respect as a program that you coach against," Hurley said. "We've got the ultimate respect for Creighton, so we know we can't perform the way we performed the other night."

Josh Dix has stepped up as the Bluejays' leader, earning a spot on the Big East Weekly Honor Roll after averaging 13.5 points, 5 rebounds and 2 assists per game. He leads the team in scoring with 12 points per contest, with Austin Swartz (11.5 ppg), Jasen Green (10.6 ppg) and Nik Graves (10 ppg) all averaging double-figures.

Creighton leads the all-time series, 9-4, but UConn has taken two of the last three meetings (both in Omaha). UConn, a 12-1 record at home this season, has only beaten the Bluejays at home twice.

Tip-off from the Basketball Capital of the World is set for 7 p.m. and can be watched on TNT and HBO Max.



UConn men's basketball takes on Georgetown in Gampel Pavilion on Feb. 14, 2026. The Huskies won 79 - 75 against the Hoyas, and celebrated Alex Karaban's program record of 116 wins.
PHOTO BY ELLA GORHAM, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

like his performance on Saturday. Eric Reibe stepped up with 10 points off the bench on 5-of-7 shooting against the Hoyas. Reed only had 4 points and fouled out. The rebounding was a concern for the bigs, combining for just three rebounds.

"Eric saved us with his offense," Hurley said after the game

and nine assists. "He's closer to playing more like a first-team all-league/one of the couple guys, for us, for Big East Player of the Year," Hurley said, still calling for him to be added to the Bob Cousy Award watch list. "He's playing a little bit like Tristen [Newton] did in year two."

on the horizon, it is important for him to get back to dominating consistently on the offensive end.

"He's really finding his groove right now," Alex Karaban, coming off an 18-point performance on Saturday, said. "Just his offensive ability itself just makes everyone's life so much easier on the court, just spacing-wise and how