

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: Fudd ties career-high in final game in Storrs, Huskies juice Orange 98-45



The UConn Huskies play against the Syracuse Orange at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies won with a final score of 98-45. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR

by **Jake McCreven**
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STORRS – Azzi Fudd doesn't like to talk about her long list of lasts in a UConn uniform – she hasn't all year. It gets her in her feels.

She's tried to tune out the emotion that's inevitably crept up on her during her final year in Storrs and focus on winning. But as the confetti rained down on Fudd after UConn won the Big East Championship two

weeks ago, the graduate wing came to a halting realization: her next two games were the last two she'd ever play in Gampel Pavilion.

The last true games in the Basketball Capital of the World. The last time playing alongside her best friends on her home-court. The last time she'd be serenaded by a sea of blue and white as her name echoed off the cavernous dome above.

It only got more gut-wrenching for the sharpshooting wing when three early fouls relegated

her to the bench for most of the first half during Sunday's game against No. 16 seed UTSA. Geno Auriemma, recognizing that he didn't need his All-American on the wing in the fourth quarter of a 38-point blowout, kept Fudd on the bench for all but 17 minutes in her penultimate game in Gampel Pavilion.

It was only fitting – or poetic, rather – that Fudd erupted for 34 points on 13-of-18 shooting in No. 1 seed UConn's 98-45 explosion of No. 9 seed Syracuse in the Round of 32, right?

With Syracuse star big Uche Izoje patrolling the paint and bottleneaking any looks at the basket in the half court early, Connecticut was forced to lean on its perimeter shot making and pressure defense to score. Fudd had no problem with that.

Snatching an arid Orange pass out of the air at the top of the key on Syracuse's second offensive possession, the graduate wing slithered to the basket and left an easy lay-in for Ashlynn Shade at the rim.

Sarah Strong added five more in the next 45 seconds with a catch-and-shoot 3-pointer and elbow jumper. Fudd picked off another pass and sliced through the vaunted Syracuse paint for another uncontested look at the rim seconds later.

It was the start of what became a historic first-half onslaught.

Syracuse turnover, UConn lay-in. Orange clank, Husky swish. UConn press, Orange 10 second violation. Rinse and (emphatically) repeat.

Fudd spearheaded the effort alongside Strong – the two combined for 40 first half points on 16-of-23 shooting and seven assists – as the Huskies took a 65-12 lead into the break, which included a 31-0 run between the first and second periods. Connecticut forced four more turnovers (16) than it allowed points (12) and made more field goals

(27) than it allowed Syracuse to take (25).

Fudd's ever steady and flaming hot hand couldn't miss from behind the arc, canning 8-of-11 attempts from 3 en route to tying her career-high in points by the mid-point of the third quarter.

Then she was pulled, much to her teammates', who implored Auriemma to keep Fudd on the court for one more basket, charging.

Exiting to one final standing ovation from the sold-out Gampel Pavilion crowd, Fudd took her seat on the bench between Strong and Serah Williams with a beaming smile and a slew of hugs from her teammates. Her 34-point outburst was the fifth – and perhaps not the final – time she eclipsed the 30-point mark as a Husky.

The Husky bench was emptied by the third quarter media timeout, with Caroline Ducharme and Ayanna Patterson entering to standing ovations of their own in place of Williams and Strong.

Kayleigh Heckel and Allie Ziebell chipped in two baskets a piece in the fourth quarter, finishing with nine and four points, respectively, and guided Connecticut to a 98-45 win in the Storrs finale.

The Huskies now turn their attention towards No. 4 seed North Carolina, who they'll meet in Fort Worth on Friday.

USG Election Results: Montanaro and Conrad win office

by **Pierce Colfer**
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The University of Connecticut's Undergraduate Student Government Spring 2026 election results are in, with Venice Montanaro and Keira Conrad winning the election for president and vice president with 63.8% of the votes.

"Keira and I are incredibly honored to have been elected to serve as your Undergraduate Student Government President and Vice President," Montanaro wrote in an email. "Our campaign was built on the commitment of 'Your Concerns. Our Actions' and our presidency will reflect our promise to use student voices to create impact. Our priorities of Accessibility, Affordability and a better Quality of Life will remain at the forefront of our initiatives. We are excited to get to work and represent the student body. Thank you."

Montanaro and Conrad received 1,561 of 2,446 votes while president candidate Joel Harris and vice-president candidate Eliyahu Cohen received 715 votes.

Syna Patel won the chief diversity officer race with 1,271 votes, 52% of the total votes.

Patel campaigned on prioritizing "listening first and making sure students feel comfortable sharing their concerns and confident that their voices matter," according to USG's executive candidates webpage.

William "Billy" Lipinski was re-elected as comptroller with 1,372 votes, 56.1% of the total votes. Lipinski served as comptroller for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Lipinski campaigned on his accomplishments in his first year as comptroller, including 100% of all internal USG purchases being on time and policy compliant and 80% of USG funding being spent in programming and student advocacy, according to an Instagram post.

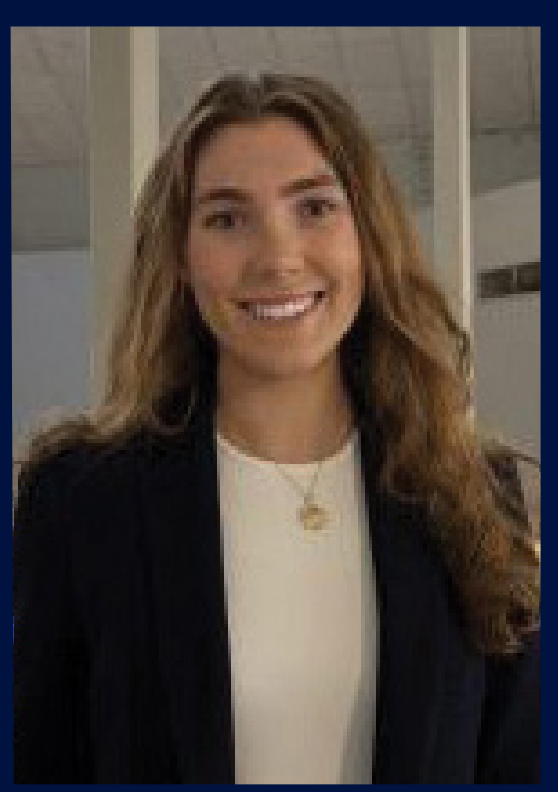
"Huge thank you to all the people that supported me throughout this campaign," Lipinski wrote in an Instagram post. "I'm so excited to hit the ground running again this year with such an amazing group. You all made this happen, and I'm forever grateful."

In the senate race, 29 out of 45 seats were filled. The remaining 16 seats are vacant.

Of the 10 constituencies, only three were able to fill all their seats: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering and the Multicultural and Diversity constituency.

The College of Liberal Arts and Science had the only competitive race, with 13 candidates running for 10 seats. Kayla DeLuca, Julia Petro, Aditi Hemant Thaker, Debora St. Surin, Layla Garner, Daphne Kam, Quinn Geier, Auveen Beheshti, Vishal Rampur and Zohaib Salem were elected as the 10 CLAS senators.

The Multicultural and Di-



Elected USG President Venice Montanaro (left) and Vice President Keira Conrad (right). Montanaro has three years of student government experience at both the Stamford and Storrs campus. Conrad is a sophomore majoring in political science and economics. PHOTO COURTESY OF USG.

versity constituency elected 10 senators to fill its seats: Patel, Katherine Gutierrez, Sadaf Zarei, Kiara Kelly, Andrea Perez-Meneses, Vedika Patel, Damian Howson, Ana Clara Apolinario, Mirolla Boules and write-in candidate Amr Othman.

The College of Engineering elected 6 senators to fill its seats: Harris, Larrisa Chiarito, Dave Silvestri, Raby Meelar and write-in candidates Euan Hall

and Brandon Zhang.

Only three other constituencies were able to fill any seats, each with only one senator.

The School of Business filled one of its five senate seats with write-in candidate Rinor Limani.

The College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources filled one of its four senate seats with Laura Wagner.

The School of Fine Arts filled

one of its two senate seats with Gwenyth "Winnie" Dubail.

All senate seats remain vacant for the Academic Center for Exploratory Students, the Neag School of Education, the School of Nursing and the School of Pharmacy.

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News

Trump says Iran is eager for a deal to end the war as he extends deadline to allow for diplomacy

(AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump said Monday the U.S. was talking with an Iranian leader and claimed the Islamic Republic was eager for a deal to end the war. He also extended a deadline for Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz or face attacks on its power plants, saying it has an additional five days.

Trump's turnaround, which held out the possibility of resolving the war now in its fourth week, served to drive down oil prices and jolt stocks. It offered a reprieve after the U.S. and Iran traded threats over the weekend that could have cut electricity to millions in Iran and around the Gulf, and knocked out desalination plants providing many desert nations with drinking water.

Trump told reporters Iran wants "to make a deal," and he claimed U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner had held talks Sunday with an Iranian leader. He did not say who that was, but said the U.S. has not talked to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei.

Iran denied talks had been held. "No negotiations have been held with the US," Iranian parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf posted on X, adding that "fakenews is used to manipulate the financial and oil markets."

Trump says Iran would give up its enriched uranium

Trump said if a deal is reached, the U.S. would move to take Iran's enriched uranium, which is critical to its disputed nuclear program. Iran has adamantly refused such demands in the past, insisting it has the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes.

Iran has already performed 99% of the centrifuge work required to produce weapons-grade uranium for nine nuclear weapons, said Robert Goldston, a Princeton University professor who researches arms control and fusion energy. As of June 2025, the International Atomic Energy Agency estimated that Iran had 440.9 kilograms (972 pounds) of highly enriched ura-

nium.

Turkey and Egypt, meanwhile, said they had spoken to the warring parties, the first sign of coordinated mediation from regional heavyweights.

The war launched by the United States and Israel has killed more than 2,000 people, shaken the global economy, sent oil prices surging and endangered some of the world's busiest air corridors.

Trump threatened over the weekend to "obliterate" Iran's power plants unless the country releases its stranglehold on the Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of all traded oil passed before the war, within 48 hours. That deadline would have expired late Monday Washington time.

The five-day extension was "subject to the success of the ongoing meetings and discussions," Trump said.

Speaking later in Tennessee, Trump said his administration has been negotiating "for a long time" with Iran.

"They want peace," Trump said. "They've agreed they will not have a nuclear weapon, you know, etc., etc. but we'll see." He said there's a "very good chance" a deal will be reached this week, crediting his threat to blow up Iranian power plants.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer indicated he was aware of talks between Iran and the U.S.

"We, the U.K., were aware that was happening," he said Monday, without giving details.

Possible international mediation

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said he spoke by phone with his Turkish counterpart, Hakan Fidan. Turkey has been an intermediary in past talks between Tehran and Washington.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry declined to comment Monday on whether the country had relayed messages between Iran and the U.S. On Sunday, Turkish officials said Fidan had also spoken to his counterparts from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt and the European Union,



Iranian Red Crescent emergency workers use a bulldozer to clear rubble from a residential building that was hit in an earlier U.S.-Israeli strike in Tehran, Iran, Monday, March 23, 2026. AP PHOTO/VAHID SALEMI

as well as with U.S. officials as part of efforts to end the war.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi said Cairo has delivered "clear messages" to Iran focusing on de-escalating the conflict, according to his office. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry said it was making "constant efforts and communications" with all parties.

An Egyptian official said the U.S. and Iran exchanged messages through Egypt, Turkey and Pakistan over the weekend aimed at averting strikes on energy infrastructure. The official was not authorized to speak to the media and so spoke on condition of anonymity.

A Gulf diplomat also said that Egypt and Turkey were leading the de-escalation efforts.

"For now, it appears they managed to avert an energy catastrophe" that would result if Trump attacked Iran's energy facilities and Iran responded, said the diplomat, who was not authorized to speak with journalists and also spoke on condition of anonymity.

Iran says Trump backed down

In the wake of Trump's turnaround, Iran's semiofficial Fars and Tasnim news agencies portrayed the American president as backing down.

"Since the start of the war, messages have been sent to Tehran by some mediators, but Iran's clear response has been that it will continue its defense until the required level of deterrence is achieved," Tasnim said. "With this kind of psychological warfare, neither the Strait of Hormuz will return to prewar

conditions nor will calm return to energy markets."

Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard had promised retaliation if Trump carried out his threat, saying Iran would hit power plants supplying electricity to American bases, "as well as the economic, industrial and energy infrastructures in which Americans have shares."

Qalibaf, the parliament speaker, said earlier that Iran would consider vital infrastructure across the region to be legitimate targets, including desalination facilities critical for drinking water in Gulf nations.

The Fars news agency, which is close to the Revolutionary Guard, published a list of such facilities, including the United Arab Emirates' nuclear power plant. Over the weekend, Iran launched missiles targeting the city of Dimona in Israel, near a facility key to its long-suspected atomic weapons program. The facility wasn't damaged.

With the U.S. deploying more amphibious assault ships and additional Marines to the Middle East, Iran's Defense Council warned against any ground attack, saying it would "lead to the mining of all access routes."

Trump has said he has no plans to send ground forces into Iran but has not ruled it out. Israel has suggested its ground forces could take part in the war.

Israel strikes Tehran and Lebanon

Israel launched new attacks Monday on Tehran, saying it was targeting infrastructure. Explosions were heard in mul-

iple locations. It wasn't immediately clear what had been hit.

Israel is also battling the Iran-linked Hezbollah militant group in Lebanon, which has fired hundreds of rockets into Israel. In recent days, Israel has hit apartment buildings in Beirut and bombed bridges over the Litani River in Lebanon's south. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun called the targeting of bridges "a prelude to a ground invasion."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel will continue to strike Iran and Lebanon, even as the U.S. considers a ceasefire.

"There's more to come," he said.

Authorities say Israeli strikes have killed more than 1,000 people in Lebanon and displaced more than 1 million.

Iran's death toll has surpassed 1,500, its Health Ministry has said. In Israel, 15 people have been killed by Iranian strikes. At least 13 U.S. military members have been killed, along with more than a dozen civilians in the occupied West Bank and Gulf Arab states.



Children played beside a fragment of an Iranian ballistic missile that landed in a schoolyard in the Israeli settlement of Peduel in the West Bank. AP PHOTO/OHAD ZWIGENBERG

The Daily Campus

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T H E D A I L Y
C R O S S W O R D

- ACROSS**
- 1 Many July 4 parties, for short
 - 5 Some protective athletic gear
 - 9 Warm (up)
 - 14 Extend one's term
 - 15 Nashville's Grand Ole ___
 - 16 Terse denial
 - 17 Smoothie berry
 - 18 Prickly ___ cactus
 - 19 Like some candy
 - 20 Jocular term for some close colleagues
 - 23 Cosmetics company that owns CeraVe
 - 24 Logan Roy's daughter on "Succession," familiarly
 - 25 Rustic dwelling
 - 28 Crafty
 - 29 Chocolate or yellow pooch
 - 31 Poolside
 - 25-Across
 - 33 Achievements tracked by Guinness
 - 36 Prefix meaning "all"
 - 39 As well
 - 40 In a frenzy
 - 41 Practice weapons that may be made of hickory
 - 46 Affectionate and familiar way to sign a note
 - 47 Not close by
 - 48 Burst, as a balloon
 - 51 Mexican Mrs.
 - 52 Big party
 - 55 Interstellar cloud
 - 57 Goodbyes, or what 20-, 33-, and 41-Across are doing?
 - 59 Apple beverage
 - 62 Sandwich cookie with many limited-edition flavors
 - 63 Seeds
 - 64 Scoring 100% on
 - 65 Nevada gambling destination
 - 66 Memo phrase
 - 67 Japanese lunchbox
 - 68 Genesis garden
 - 69 New Mexico skiing destination
- DOWN**
- 1 Rumbles
 - 2 Desperate whisper to a parent in front of one's crush, maybe
 - 3 Industrial site that may become a swimming spot
 - 4 Sharp increase
 - 5 All the rage
 - 6 Gorillas, e.g.
 - 7 Drips and ___
 - 8 Red wine grape
 - 9 Portable cleaner, for short
 - 10 Outback birds
 - 11 Colony insect
 - 12 Youngster
 - 13 Farm pen
 - 21 Sainly glow
 - 22 "___ to Each Other": Olivia Dean hit
 - 25 Cause injury to
 - 26 Ctrl+Z, on a PC
 - 27 Chore
 - 30 Simple sammies
 - 32 Feathery wraps
 - 33 ___-angle lens
 - 34 ___ Jones
 - 35 Skylight spot
 - 36 Birds whose young sometimes face-plant to sleep
 - 37 Tie up, as a boat
 - 38 ___ Scotia, Canada
 - 42 Trade restriction
 - 43 Close by
 - 44 Crab ___: fried appetizer filled with cream cheese
 - 45 Did some doodling
 - 48 "Your Pet, Our Passion" food brand
 - 49 Seasoned exper
 - 50 Makes the grade
 - 53 Shop
 - 54 Added to the staff
 - 56 Hasbro toy that requires quick reflexes
 - 57 ___-up emotions
 - 58 State bird of Hawaii
 - 59 Taxi
 - 60 Freezer cubes
 - 61 Clamor

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59	60	61				62				63			
64						65				66			
67						68				69			

By Victoria Fernandez Grande

3/24/26

Monday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	M	B	A		C	L	O	U	D		G	U	Y		
A	T	E	A	M		L	O	U	S	E		U	N	O		
H	O	L	L	Y	H	U	N	T	E	R		S	T	U		
I	N	T	L		A	M	E	S		A	B	H	O	R		
				O	P	U	S		H	A	I	R				
				P	O	L	L	Y	H	O	L	L	I	D	A	Y
C	H	I	N	O		E	N	O		M	A	M	A			
R	E	X		W	A	L	L	E	T	S		Z	I	P		
A	R	E	A		E	Y	E			W	E	E	D	S		
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				T	O	O	N		R	A	N	D				
B	I	S	O	N		G	E	A	R		E	S	T	A		
U	F	O		D	O	L	L	Y	P	A	R	T	O	N		
M	S	U		E	V	O	K	E		F	L	I	R	T		
P	O	P		R	A	W	E	R		T	Y	R	E	S		

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The Daily Sudoku

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

ARE YOU UP FOR THE CHALLENGE?

Level 1 2 3 4

Solution to Monday's puzzle

3/24/26

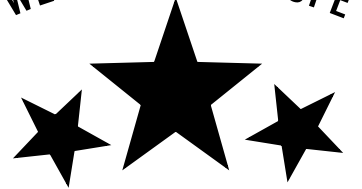
3	9	7	8	4	5	1	2	6
8	1	6	2	3	9	7	4	5
2	5	4	1	7	6	8	3	9
7	3	5	9	1	4	2	6	8
9	6	2	5	8	7	4	1	3
1	4	8	3	6	2	9	5	7
4	8	9	6	2	3	5	7	1
6	7	1	4	5	8	3	9	2
5	2	3	7	9	1	6	8	4

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

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News

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE



by Maleena Muzio

Mar. 22 to Mar. 28

Welcome back to the weekly horoscope! This horoscope is based on predictions made by AstroStyle or astrostyle.com. Keep reading to hear what to expect as the week unfolds.

Overview

Be prepared to clear obstacles in your way. Perseverance and drive will be needed for the road ahead. Hard work and even teamwork will lead you to where you want to be.

Aries

March 21 - April 19

If your emotions have overwhelmed you lately, take a step back before making impulsive decisions.

Taurus

April 20 - May 20

Invest in your network — not necessarily your finances.

Gemini

May 21 - June 20

Ditch the outdated version of yourself and prioritize change.

Cancer

June 21 - July 22

Silver linings and connections will become clear. A person or situation may be connected to various aspects of your life for a purpose.

Leo

July 23 - Aug. 22

Reclaim control and begin taking the steps to manifest your goals into reality.

Virgo

Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

Lessons can be learned even from tough or confusing situations.

Libra

Sept. 23 - Oct. 23

Try something new! Allow yourself to leave room for change.

Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 21

Take a deep breath. Stress is temporary and will be gone soon.

Sagittarius

Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

Sit with your thoughts and feelings before moving forward with a major decision.

Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Don't be afraid to ask for help with endless tasks! Prioritize and cut that to-do list down.

Aquarius

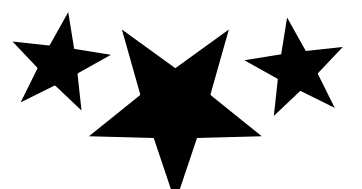
Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Use clear and direct language when having an important conversation.

Pisces

Feb. 19 - March 20

Time to let go! Lift some weight off your shoulders — maybe decluttering or cutting a bad relationship off.



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Life

Students taste cuisines from around the world at SUBOG's World Food Showcase

by Ayyan Tamjeed

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Some University of Connecticut students concluded their Spring Break by sampling delights from around the world in the third annual food showcase held by the Student Union Board of Governors (SUBOG) on Sunday, March 22.

Held in the Student Union Ballroom, UConn students feasted on food from five restaurants representing five different countries, all of which reside in Connecticut.

Gallo's Restaurant in Willimantic, Conn., represented Mexican cuisines with their spread. Their

menu included staples like Chiles Rellenos, a green chili pepper stuffed with mincemeat and coated with eggs, tacos and Sopas, a dish that consisted of a fried masa base with savory toppings such as refried beans, lettuce, tomato etc.

Seoul BBQ from New Britain, Conn., brought Korean cuisine into the mix. Their menu had Japchae, a savory and slightly sweet dish of stir-fried noodles and vegetables; Tteokbokki, cylinder-shaped rice cakes covered in spicy sauce; and Kimchi, a side dish of fermented vegetables.

Banana Brazil Grill in Meriden, Conn., brought Brazilian food. Traditional

Brazilian dishes like Coxinha, a snack which consists of shredded meat inside a ball of dough; Pão de Queijo, a baked cheese ball that is another popular snack in Brazil; and grilled chicken and beef.

PABS African Restaurant in East Hartford, Conn., represented Nigerian cuisine. They had Egusi soup, which consisted of ground-up Egusi seeds and chicken; Jollof rice, a popular West-African rice dish, made with rice, chillis, onions and a host of spices; and fried Plantains, starchy bananas that are fried until they're golden brown.

Mykonos Mediterranean Restaurant in Newington,



Students attend SUBOG's World of Food event at the Student Union Ballroom on March 22, 2026. The menu included Brazilian, Greek, Korean, Mexican and Nigerian cuisine, and the first 100 people to complete the World of Food crossword won free lunch totes.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Conn., was the last restaurant on this list and they brought Greek food to the party. They served Gyro meat, which could complement baked Pita bread or creamy Tzatziki sauce. Made from yogurt, cucumber, garlic and olive oil; a savory pastry in Spanakopita, filled with a mixture of spinach, feta cheese and onions or leeks; or Pastitsio, a baked pasta dish that bears resemblance to lasagna.

There was a party-like atmosphere in the Ballroom Sunday night, as tables were dressed in decorations representing different cultures. Flags upon flags adorned the walls and music blared from the speakers, a blend of K-pop, Latin pop, Afrobeats and more.

Karan Rana, a sixth-semester management in engi-

neering and manufacturing major, also appreciated being able to savor foods from different cultures as well.

"I was just here for the food," Rana said. "A lot of my friends are from different cultures, so it's nice to be able to try some different food and experience some of that."

Rana liked the Mexican food on offer, as it met his dietary restrictions,

"Mexican food was pretty good. I'm a vegetarian so it's nice to have options here during this event," Rana said.

While Rana said the Mexican cuisine was great, he said he hopes there will be some Indian food at the showcase next time round.

"I mean, not to be partial, but some Indian food would be nice."

'Age of Attraction' — WHY MODERN DATING IS UNSERIOUS

by Catherine Rivera

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Like R&B artist Aaliyah once sang, "Age ain't nothing but a number." Or is it?

On Wednesday, March 11, Netflix released their new reality dating series "Age of Attraction." In case you weren't satisfied with the mass amount of reality shows alike, such as "Love Island," "Love Is Blind" and "Too Hot To Handle," just to name a few. Now you can watch more strangers attempt to form connections, all while feeling like you're interrupting the most awkward Tinder date of all time!

"Age of Attraction" follows 20 single men and women on their journeys to find their true loves. What makes this show different from all the rest? The contestants must form their new relationships while simultaneously being unaware of their partner's age from the get-go.

In this new series, hosted by Nick Viall and Natalie Joy, an age-gap couple of their own, we meet people that are eager to prove that an age gap shouldn't overshadow good compatibility, and are told your soulmate may very well be someone who was around before the internet was invented. With the ages of contestants ranging from 22 to 60 years old, this show feels like a poor excuse for Gen X to not be labeled as creepy for going for someone 20 or more years younger than them in the name of reality TV.

Age gap relationships have always been a big debate, rife with history and controversy surrounding the topic's very problematic reality. I find it strange that Netflix is trying to normalize the idea of big age gaps within relationships. But there have been many famous age gap rela-

tionships in pop culture — just ask Leonardo DiCaprio.

Now, psychologically speaking, there is many reasons why someone may go for someone much older than them, with a lot of the contestants justifying their participation by saying that they're looking for someone who is more mature, responsible and stable in their life than those in their age group. The idea doesn't sound too bad, until they find out they're closer in age to their prospects' children than they are to their partners.

But seriously, there's plenty of people who seek older partners to provide a sense of security, safety and maturity. So, what's the reasoning for the people who go for someone a lot younger than them?

For many of the older contestants in this show, they claim to be looking for active, independent and free-spirited partners. If that's the case, I'd point them to their nearest dog shelter. However, it gets even weirder when certain contenders say they saw similarities between their connection and a close relative or even going as far as to seek certain traits attributing to them; which feels like only further fueling the fire that is hating on age-gap relationships.

Only five episodes have been released so far, with new episodes coming out every Wednesday. While the idea of seeing how these relationships adapt in the real world sounds interesting, the premise of the entire show is off-putting, and I don't see it being renewed for a second season. But who knows, maybe next year there will be 40 more contestants who are just as desperate to find love.

RATING: 1.5/5



A NETFLIX REALITY SERIES

Does age matter

when it comes

to love?

AGE OF ATTRACTION

WEDNESDAYS STARTING
MARCH 11

ONLY ON NETFLIX

Promotional image for new Netflix series "Age of Attraction." This controversial series has sparked debate online as some couples have age gaps large enough to be parental. A second season has not yet been confirmed.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @NICKVIALL ON INSTAGRAM.

Your Battle of the Band Winners: West of the Gate

by **Pierce Colfer** | ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR | HE/HIM/HEY/THEM | pierce.colfer@uconn.edu

In September 2024, two strangers walked into a Guitar Center in Groton, Conn.

Colin Gordon just began his first semester at the University of Connecticut's Avery Point campus, and headed to the back of the store to check out and play some of the guitars.

At the other end of the store, Jack Lombardo, a UConn alum, was looking to pick up a new electric drum kit for Christmas. He was talking to the employee at the counter when he heard "some beautiful guitar solos lilt through the store."

Unbeknownst to Gordon, Lombardo was searching for a guitarist to start a band with. "I walked over and we strike up a conversation," Lombardo said. "I'm like, 'you want to play with us? I'm having a Labor Day party. You wanna come?'"

Gordon said yes. Fast forward almost a year and a half, and Lombardo and Gordon, alongside Charlie Gauthier, Alex Herrera and Mike Melillo, became the winners of WHUS Radio's Battle of the Bands as the band West of the Gate.

"It was euphoric and exhilarating," Gordon said.

West of the Gate is a jam band based in central Connecticut, focusing on long, improvisational sets of original songs and covers.

"Think of it as, it starts somewhere, it gets somewhere and it ends nowhere," Gordon said.

The band formed in September 2024 and won the Battle of the Bands after performing live together for the first time.

Lombardo, the band's frontman, lead singer and songwriter, graduated from UConn in 2024 with a degree in computer science, and currently works as a software engineer. He started West of the Gate in his basement after wanting to start a band for years. "Literally my biggest de-

sire from 2023 onward was, I wanted to start a band," Lombardo said. "I played music in high school. I lead worship sometimes in church, but that's different than being in a rock band, and I love doing that, but I was like, 'man, I want to be in a band.'"

Gordon, who is now a fourth-semester UConn student majoring in journalism and linguistics, is the band's lead guitarist and "hype man," Lombardo said.

Herrera, the bassist, is an eighth-semester student at UConn, and Gauthier, the drummer, is an Eastern Connecticut State University alum. Lombardo, Herrera and Gauthier had known each other for years prior to the forming of the band and were the first people Lombardo went to.

Melillo, the rhythm guitarist, graduated from UConn in 2023 with a degree in economics, and currently works as a real estate agent in Milford, Conn. Lombardo had lived with Melillo during his time at UConn, and "accidentally" got him to join the band when venting about his inability to find a guitarist.

"I was telling him I'm trying to start a band, but I'm really looking for a guitarist," Lombardo said. "And then he and I just look at each other, and he's like, 'I'm a guitarist.' So I'm like, 'well, can you join?' And he said yes."

The band began having on-and-off practices in Lombardo's basement, which had poor acoustics, before relocating to a new rehearsal spot in a church that was closing.

"[The church was] just a big empty hall with a stage up front, a small stage, enough room for a drum set and all of us if we stand close," Lombardo said.

Although the band was practicing semi-consistently, most times weren't with all five members, and a hiatus began in August 2025 because of the unavailability of members. Gordon studied abroad in



Bands compete in WHUS Radio's Battle of the Bands on Feb. 21, 2026 at Rome Ballroom. West of the Gate were formed in September 2024 and played their first live show at Battle of the Bands.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Tokyo during the summer of 2025, Gauthier went on a mission trip in Uganda for three months and Lombardo was in the process of getting married at the time.

However, this changed when Gordon heard about WHUS' Battle of the Bands. Gordon, who is a part of two other bands along with West of the Gate, had an idea.

"My divine comedy was that I'm gonna get all three of my bands to apply and whoever wins, I get to win it all," Gordon said.

However, Gordon realized that neither of his other bands were available for the event. So, Lombardo jumped on getting the band to record an audition tape. But the band faced another issue here. They had never written or performed an original song before.

"We found out the night before that, actually, we need to have an original song as part of the audition tape. Problem is, we don't have any original songs," Lombardo said.

Lombardo said that an idea came to him for a song in the middle of the night. He rushed out of bed and spent 45 minutes "whisper-singing" the melody into his phone in an attempt not to wake his wife up. This idea culminated in the band's first original song, "I Get This Feeling," which they used for their audition tape.

The band submitted their audition tape for the Battle of the Bands in January, but they didn't learn that they'd gotten accepted until two weeks before the event. This didn't stop the band from spending the following month preparing.

"We had to assume that we were in because if I didn't start writing music the day after we submitted the tape, we would be cooked," Lombardo said. "Because, 'oh crap, we need 30 minutes of original material, what are we gonna do?'"

When the band found out that they had gotten accepted, it became a two-week-long sprint to make sure they were ready for the performance.

Although the band was putting their all into practicing, they had never performed together live and weren't sure how it was going to go.

"Obviously we wanted to win, but I was kind of just content to play it up and

have fun," Lombardo said. "That was the mindset I was trying to have because it's our first performance."

Once the competition started, their nerves weren't calmed.

"We went up against Vices Inc., so that was our competition for the first bracket," Gordon said. "We heard they had 2 originals, and I think 3 covers, and the last cover was Pink Pony Club by Chappell Roan, and as soon as I heard that I said, 'we're cooked.'"

However, despite their reservations, the band ended up winning that round "in a landslide," Gordon said, and headed to the final round against Part of the Problem.

"For us and Part of the Problem... it was neck and neck," Gordon said. "I was tense. Everyone was tense."

The round was so close that the director of the event had to decide who the winner was, Lombardo said. Minutes later, WHUS announced that West of the Gate were the victors.

Lombardo said that it was "tough competition" going against the two bands.

"Vice Inc. definitely had a really good stage presence, and Part of the Problem had a really solid foundation with their music," Lombardo said. "They were very in-line, they were very coordinated. I have high respect to their musicianship."

The band initially planned to dissolve after the concert, Lombardo said, but winning the Battle of the Bands has changed that, at least temporarily.

"We're together basically as long as we have something that we need to stay together for," Lombardo said. "It doesn't have to be for forever."

The band is looking to have a studio session with WHUS to get their music on streaming services and, historically, the winner of the Battle of the Bands opens for WHUS' Spring Fling concert.



Bands compete in WHUS Radio's Battle of the Bands on Feb. 21, 2026 at Rome Ballroom. Vices Inc., Part of the Problem, Elizabory and West of the Gate competed, but attendees voted West of the Gate the winner.

PHOTOGRAPH BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



Life

Post-metal band **Neurosis** returns after a decade depicting the apocalypse

by **Bonnibel Lilith Rampertab** | CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT | SHE/HER/HERS | lilith.rampertab@uconn.edu

Neurosis isn't your average metal band. What started out as a run-of-the-mill band that crosses post-hardcore punk and thrash metal with boring songwriting became one of the premier avant-garde and progressive metal bands of its time. They challenge song structures with build-ups to earned catharsis. Though this often alienated listeners, it's for the sake of bold art with integrity.

1991's "Souls at Zero" was one of the first albums that helped push boundaries for what metal was capable of, using experimental music such as the heavily lauded experimental rock band Swans as a blueprint. Since then, the band has continued to prioritize the audience, earning a release from tension through long passages of rising tension instead of instant gratification. While this discouraged some listeners from appreciating their discography, those who stayed enjoyed the grandiose sludginess that is Neurosis' music as memorable sonic artistry.

However, the band wasn't without their hiccups. After 2016's lackluster "Fires Within Fires", the band seemed to end with a whimper, as a shell of its former self. Belief in a next album would be squashed by a 2019 statement from Neurosis frontman Scott Kelly stating he abused his wife and children. This led the rest of the band to release a public statement after hearing this news for the first time, condemning Kelly for his harmful behavior. Kelly has since retired from making music.

However, out of nowhere on Friday, March 20, Neurosis returned with "An Undying Love for a Burning World" with a new frontman: guitarist and vocalist Aaron Turner of sludge metal band Sumac and post-metal band Isis fame. This surprised and elated many fans who had lost hope of another album from this seminal metal band.

"We Are Torn Wide Open" is a short and sweet spoken declaration for social change within society that condemns the separation of people presumably due to a wide variety in differences as "the root of all our disease." Turner continues, "The dissonance is deafening", talking not only to the physical reinforcement of difference but also the cognitive and psychological ones. This would set the tone for the rest of the album's dismal, post-apocalyptic lyrics.

"Mirror Deep" demonstrates not only a trademark sludge-filled heaviness they were always capable

of but also an interest in electronic soundscapes buried in the mix. This helps emphasize not only the chaos of the sound but perhaps also the changes in the world due to digital technology. There's an interlude in the middle of the song that seems out of place for a band like this, but it was only a build-up to an explosive second part to a metal onslaught almost resembling a jump scare.

"First Red Rays" juxtaposes beautiful, lush guitar melodies partially enhanced by synths layered in and the usual cutthroat abrasiveness of metal. There's also a buzzy sound effect that

pairs well with the wall of sound present for half of the song. There's also a guitar solo that's reminiscent of the grunge band Alice in Chains' "Jar of Flies" EP which makes this song even more beautiful. To make matters even prettier, the clean vocals from Turner near the end of the song are the cherry on top.

"Blind" starts with an unsettling landscape, blending soft spaceship-like industrial noises with a few guitar notes before it draws back into the expected programming. This also has some of the best vocals on the entire album because of the growled lyrics.

"Seething and Scattered" has some of the most interesting lyrics but probably the most boring sonic layout of the entire album comparatively. It follows the theme of separation and difference, as highlighted in the spoken word intro. With the lyrics "Walls of division A psy-

chic incision" and "Manufactured separation," it shows how reinforced this cognizance of what makes us different is by the systems and structures that make up our world.

While "Untethered" has a really pretty ending and "In the Waiting Hours" has some of the most memorable bass playing on the album, "Last Light" blows the last stretch — and the entire album — out of the water. Starting with programmed kick drums and a loud, crunchy synth, you wouldn't expect this song to be one of Neurosis' most beautiful compositions in their entire discography. However, sticking true to the prolonged road to catharsis Neurosis is notorious for, it offers the listener a beautiful melodic progression that merges analog and digital sounds. It ultimately sounds like accepting existential defeat in a dilapidating world. It's a reward not only for listening to the album, but for surviving as long as we did.

Neurosis kept their ethos of challenging songwriting but adapted it for a world all too familiar with technology through incorporating electronic sounds in their music. The result is something that can either stand the test of time or age with us. Either way, it's beautiful and something worth embracing.



Album cover for "Undying Love for a Burning World" by Neurosis. The album was released March 20, 2026. PHOTO COURTESY OF @NEUROSISOAKLAND ON INSTAGRAM.

RATING: 4.5/5



Neurosis band members. "An Undying Love for a Burning World" is the band's twelfth studio album and it was a surprise release after a 12 year hiatus.

PHOTO COURTESY OF @NEUROSISOAKLAND ON INSTAGRAM.



Opinion

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Earning 6 NENPA awards, The Daily Campus emphasizes the importance of student journalism

EDITORIAL EDITORIAL EDITORIAL EDITORIAL EDITORIAL

The Daily Campus received six awards from the New England Newspaper and Press Association's Better Newspaper Competition in the college division on Saturday, March 14, tripling the number of awards won last year. As the university's only student-run newspaper and the sole daily-print paper in the news desert of Tolland County, The Daily Campus continues its 130-year-long mission to serve the campus and local communities and to train generations after generations of journalists.

The Better Newspaper Competition awards recognize excellence in reporting from the previous year, meaning all rewarded reporting took place during the 2024-2025 academic year. The Daily Campus earned two first-place awards in this year's competition. The first was presented to an editorial about the strain of the University of Connecticut's enrollment growth on students and the local community. Former Daily Campus news editor Aiza Shaikh and former writers Joey Gottlieb and Liliana French earned first-place in the "Right to Know" category for their article show-

ing emails obtained through the Freedom of Information Act between UConn President Radenka Maric and university administration regarding the Israel-Palestine conflict.

The Daily Campus also earned four second-place awards. Photo Editors Connor Sharp and Emma Meidinger each earned awards in the Sports Photo and Feature Photo categories respectively. Associate Managing Editor Colbi Loranger earned an award for her design of the Nov. 7, 2025 opinion page, which featured articles regarding the results of the presidential election. French won another award for her news article about 245 academic programs at risk of being cut.

As seen in cases such as the Indiana Student Daily and Morgan State University's The Spokesman, student journalism is under siege. University administrations have attempted to censor and control student media by monitoring who student journalists can interview and how or when they can distribute news to campus. Student journalists are among the most vulnerable members of the media as they have limited access



FILE PHOTO

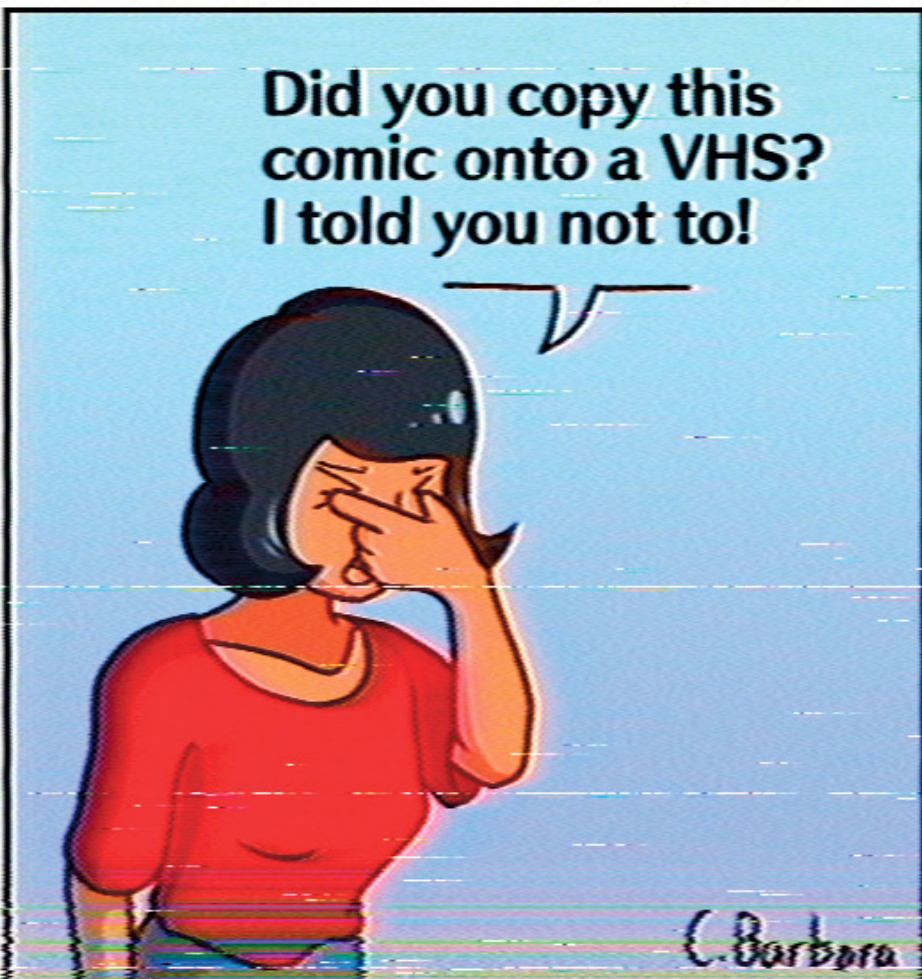
to funding, equipment and other resources necessary to run a newsroom. This academic year, Florida State University's student paper, the FSView, eliminated its printing and became an online-only publication. Many college papers have cut their circulation from daily to weekly, or from weekly to monthly, leaving The Daily Campus as one of the last daily print papers in both the college and professional spheres.

The Daily Campus believes it's imperative that student journalism is supported not just by their organization's universities, but also by their local communities. Per the Daily Campus mission statement, the paper aims "to provide the best possible environment for students to learn, experience and develop skills related to news media." Student media organizations are training facilities for the next generation of journalists.

We are training students to one day investigate wrongdoings in local and national governments, to gain the trust of sources when they are in their most vulnerable states and to capture compelling stories that make people feel more connected to their communities. To be able to get student journalists to that level, student media needs the freedom to practice journalism without fear of repercussions from the institutions that house them.



COMIC OF THE DAY BY CHRISTIAN BARBARA, CONTRIBUTING ARTIST



C. Barbara

Opinion

Photo of the Day | Happy times back in Storrs Connecticut :D



UConn students hang out in McMahon Residence Hall before the women's basketball game. The team won in an absolute victory over Syracuse.

PHOTO BY MORGAN BLANCHARD, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

Op-Ed: UConn must protect international graduate students

by **Julia Oas**
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My name is Julia Oas, and I am sharing some statements on behalf of my fellow international workers. I am a member of the Graduate Assistant and Post-Doc Union's International GA Rights working group and here I share thoughts and testimonies we collected anonymously. Across the country, international workers are subject to litigation,

harassment and violations of constitutional rights. Here at UConn, international GAs have wanted to speak out in support of our union's proposed common-sense protections for their rights in our upcoming contract, but have felt scared to publicly attach their names to anything vaguely "political."

Their fears are not unfounded. These threats hit our community directly around a year ago, when over a dozen UConn students had their work status

revoked in an illegal federal action that subjected them to the immediate threat of immigration enforcement and criminalization. Though visas were subsequently reinstated for these students, one of our fellow graduate workers describes an experience during this time:

"One day, while I was sitting in my lab, two UConn staff abruptly entered the space and aggressively asked me whether I was a U.S. citizen. It turns out they were looking for a student

who had already been moved to another project. The way they barged into the lab and asked, without any context, 'Are you a U.S. citizen?' left me feeling stressed, unsafe and targeted. What if this happened while I was teaching, putting both me and my students in a critical and frightening situation?"

In our contract negotiations, we have asked that UConn not unnecessarily share non-citizen GA information, respect federal and local laws that restrict federal immigration authority access to private spaces, establish a modest emergency fund and give as much job security reassurance as possible to GAs who experience immigration issues outside their control. We proposed those protections on Jan

15, and the university took until March 12th to respond. Their response rejected most of what we proposed. Anyone from the public can take a look at the public bargaining tracker on our union's website.

As another international graduate assistant wrote, "this historical moment calls for bravery, for [UConn] to stand up actively for working students and by working intentionally to protect and uplift the entire GA community that sustains this University."

Julia Oas is a Fourth-year doctoral student in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation, at the Neag School of Education, and a member of the Graduate Employee & Postdoc Union (GEU).



A member of the Graduate Employee & Postdoc union holds up a sign in protest for better contracts. The GEU keeps track of bargaining updates on their website. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GEU WEBSITE



The Wilbur Cross building on UConn's Storrs campus. The building houses many administrative offices. PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

NEW PEACOCK DOCUSERIES EXPLORES THE HISTORY OF BLACK NFL QUARTERBACKS

by **Juliana Assis**
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From Marlin Briscoe to Lamar Jackson, Peacock's four-part docuseries "Field Generals: History of the Black Quarterback" was released on Feb. 5 and explores the oppression Black quarterbacks have faced since the dawn of the National Football League.

The series begins by contextualizing the resistance against Black quarterbacks in American football.

According to the docuseries, white people in America were threatened by the idea of a successful Black quarterback because they didn't want Black success to spread to other areas of life. They were terrified of a Black quarterback leading to a Black CEO or even a Black president which would "compromise" their way of life.

The docuseries said Americans widely believed that the role of Black athletes on the football field was to be "grunts," or players that sacrificed themselves to either defend the quarterback or take down the opposing team's quarterback. Additionally, Black athletes were thought to be incapable of the playing the more "mentally demanding" positions.

These ideas were prevalent until the 1960s, the turning point of the Civil Rights movement in America.

While Black Americans fought for the right to vote and to enjoy the same public facilities white Americans enjoyed, Black athletes began to fight for the right to play whatever position they desired.

That fight began with Marlin Briscoe.

Briscoe played quarterback at The University of Nebraska at Omaha and was very successful, but he was drafted by the

Denver Broncos to play as a Defensive Back. In Briscoe's rookie season, the Broncos' existing quarterback lineup experienced a series of injuries, so they were left with no choice but to use Briscoe.

Briscoe played exceptionally well, setting a record of 14 touchdown passes in his rookie season, a Broncos record he held until 2024. Briscoe was fast, unique and had an exceptional arm that made him impossible to defend against.

Despite his enormous success as a quarterback, Briscoe was not asked to play that position for the next season due to his race. Briscoe fought for the opportunity to compete to be the Broncos starting quarterback, but he was denied and ultimately cut from the team.

While Briscoe was unsuccessful in becoming a quarterback, his story showed that it was possible for a Black quarterback to break into the NFL, despite mounting resistance against non-white players.

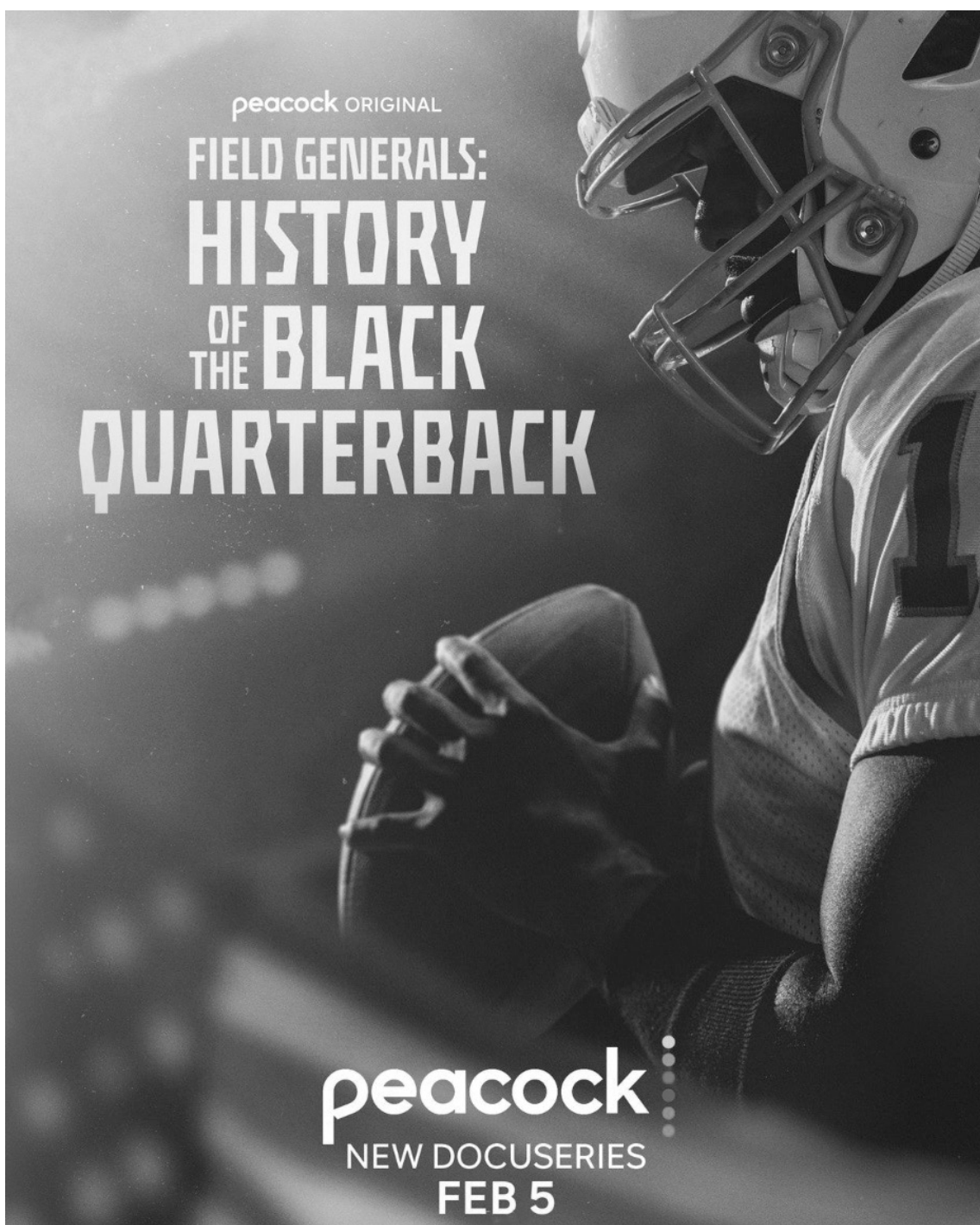
Briscoe's story was inspiring to many of the other quarterbacks featured in the series, including Warren Moon, Doug Williams and Randall Cunningham.

The docuseries includes commentary from several former NFL quarterbacks, most notably James "Shack" Harris, the first Black quarterback to start in an NFL playoff game.

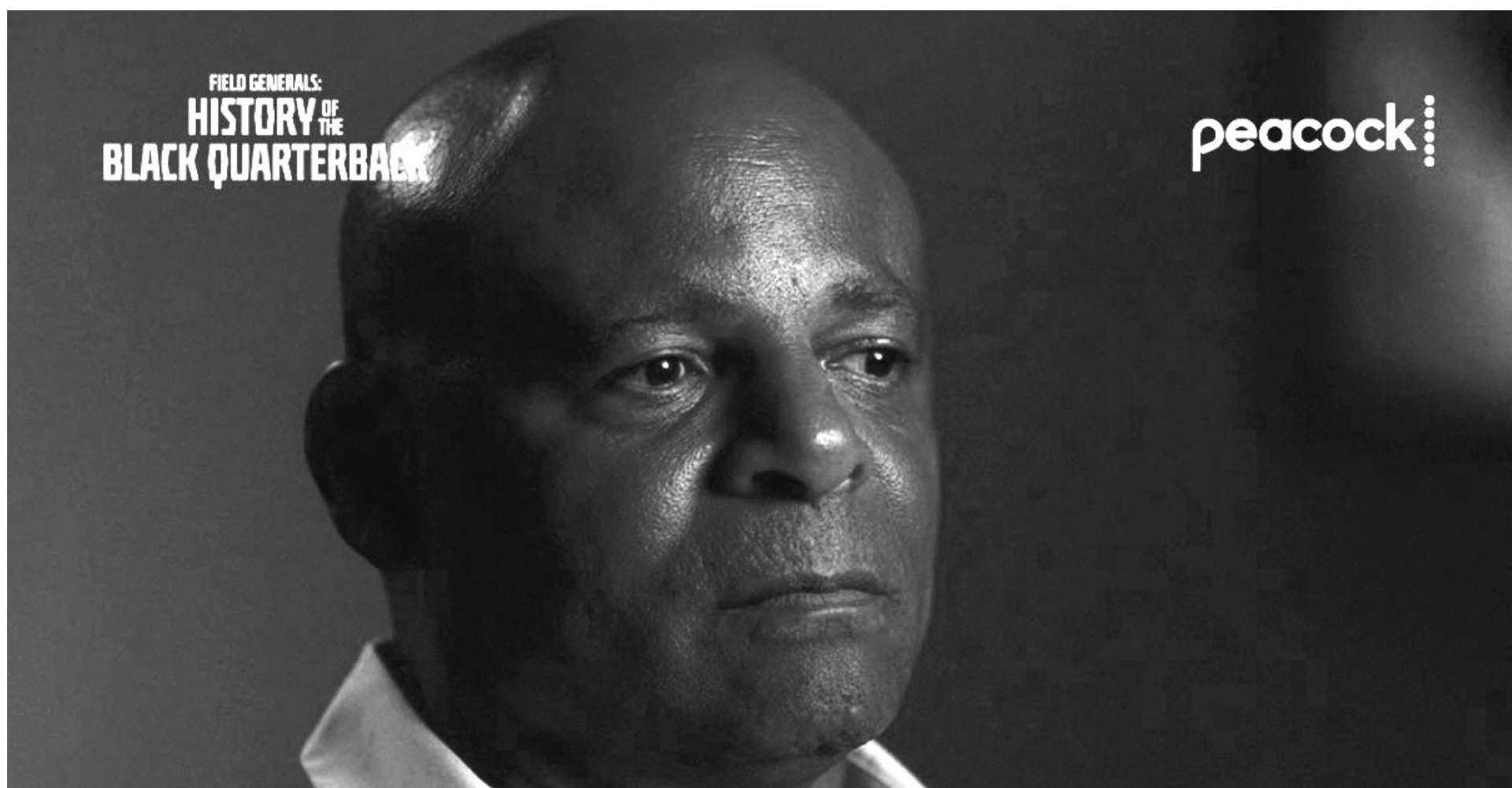
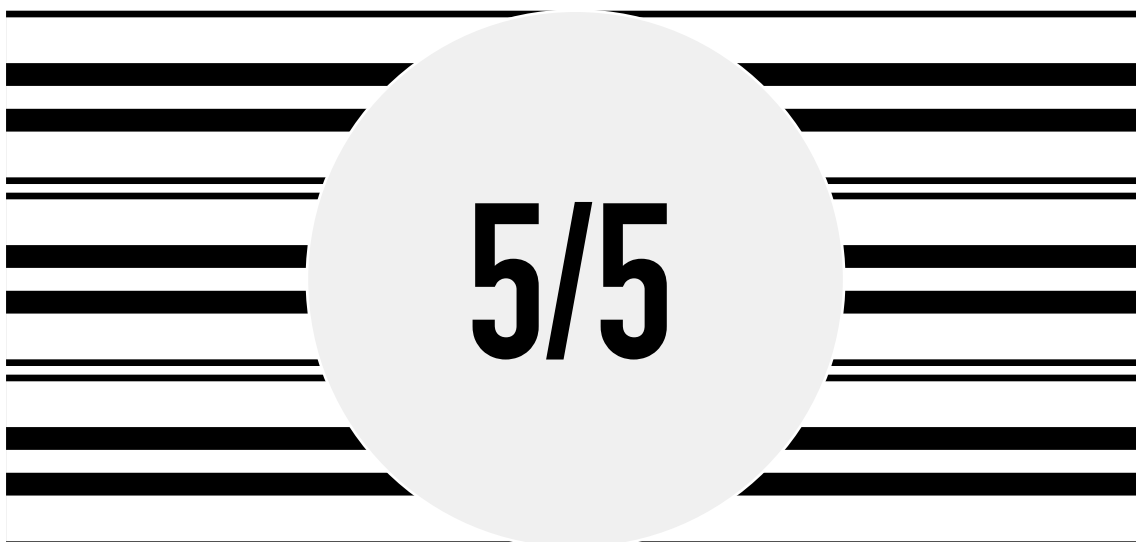
Other contributors include cultural critics, journalists and professors like Michael Eric Dyson, a professor of African American Studies at Vanderbilt University, Michael Wilbon, a reporter for The Washington Post and Jim Trotter, a professional football Hall of Fame journalist.

Ultimately, the series emphasizes that Black quarterbacks are not just part of football's past, but central to its future.

Rating: 5/5



Promotional image for Peacock's new docuseries "Field Generals: History of the Black Quarterback." The series was released Feb. 20 and delves into how Black quarterbacks fought against oppression in the NFL. PHOTO COURTESY OF @THEGENTLEMAN



Still of Warren Moon in "Field Generals: History of the Black Quarterback." Moon was the first Black quarterback inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 2006. PHOTO COURTESY OF @PEACOCK ON INSTAGRAM

Sports

Photo of the Day | Women's basketball



The UConn Huskies play against the Syracuse Orange at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies won with a final score of 98-45.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CONNOR SHARP,
PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

WILKER'S WEEKLY: GRADING THE PATRIOTS' 2026 FREE AGENCY MOVES

by **Graham Wilker**
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FB Reggie Gilliam: A- 3 Years, \$10.8 million

Jack Westover was the first Patriots fullback in history to go the entire regular season without a single yard of offense. While he was re-signed, a transition back to tight end is likely in the cards with Gilliam now on the roster. The former Toledo Rocket was instrumental in James Cook's success in 2025, and the Patriots will be looking for him to have that type of impact on a backfield led by TreVeyon Henderson, who totaled 66 yards on the ground in the

playoffs.

TE Julian Hill: D- 3 Years, \$15 million

The Patriots ran 13 personnel (2 TE and a FB) at a higher rate than any other team in 2025, so upgrading over Austin Hooper seemed like an obvious decision if they wanted to continue that trend in '26. Hill, while younger, isn't an upgrade. He has 298 receiving yards, no touchdowns and two fumbles in three years. He's a sound blocker, but \$5 million yearly is a high price for an extra offensive lineman. With players like David Njoku, Cade Otton and Chig Okonkwo all hitting the open market, the Patriots paid a high price for a player who's yet to

be productive in the NFL.

WR Romeo Doubs: C 4 Years, \$68 million

Similar to my thoughts on the signing of Mack Hollins last year before Stefon Diggs was signed, I like the player, but not as an answer to the receiver problem. \$17 million per season is about the going rate for receivers of Doubs' quality nowadays, especially given Jalen Nailor's \$35 million deal. If the Patriots can find a way to land A.J. Brown after the draft, and Doubs becomes the WR2, I could confidently bump this grade up. I don't have a problem with the contract or the player, but he's yet to show true WR1 ability.

OG Alijah Ve-

ra-Tucker: A+ 3 Years, \$42 million

Vera-Tucker, without a doubt, is one of the best guards in football when healthy. That last caveat, however, has been a major asterisk since he entered the league as the No. 14 pick in 2021. He's played in only 43 of 85 possible games in his career and missed the entirety of last year with a torn tricep. His sub-2% pressure rate allowed in 2024 would have been the best among all guards in 2025, and given his incentive-laden contract, AVT could be a major factor in improving an offensive line that allowed 21 sacks in four playoff games.

ED Dre'Mont Jones: C- 3 years, \$36.5 million

285-pound Denico Autry thrived under Vrabel in Tennessee as a massive edge defender, and it seems the coach of the year is looking for a similar product in Jones. K'Lavon Chaisson was a more productive pass rusher last year, but his missed tackle rate eclipsed 40%, a dismal figure. Jones was under 10% in 2025. Considering his career high 7 sacks with below average defensive tackle play, Jones could breakout in 2026. Nonetheless, Chaisson inked a deal worth less than Jones, and as mentioned, was a more productive pass rusher last season. Re-signing Chaisson and further

reinforcing the edge through investing a

top-64 pick in the draft at the position would have been my course of action rather than signing a player who turns 30 during the season to a 3-year deal.

LB K.J. Britt: D 1 Year, \$1.4 million

Britt is primarily a special teamer but expecting him to replace Jack Gibbens when Gibbens left for under \$4 million per season seems unnecessary. Similar to Doubs, I don't mind the player, but expecting him to play a legitimate defensive role, which he's slated to do as of now, is foolish.

CB Kindle Vildor: B- 1 Year, Unknown (likely around \$1-2 million)

Vildor is an experienced cornerback who is the clear cut CB4 as things stand, a position that was under scrutiny from Wilker's Weekly last season. I'm not sure he's a massive upgrade over Charles Woods, but he played for Vrabel's Tennessee in 2023. Over the last two years, quarterbacks are 28/46 with two touchdowns and an interception when targeting him

S Kevin Byard: A+ 1 Year, \$9 million

As disappointed as I was with the Patriots allowing Jaylinn Hawkins to walk, landing last year's interceptions leader and three-time All-Pro isn't a bad consolation prize. While he'll turn 33 before the season, Byard is one of the best players Mike Vrabel coached, as the two were in Tennessee together until Vrabel's firing in 2023. While it's a short-term fix to the safety position, a defensive backfield of Christian Gonzalez, Carlton Davis, Marcus Jones, Craig Woodson and now Byard, is one of, if not the best, in football.

S Mike Brown: C- 1 Year, \$1.3 million

Brown played four defensive snaps in 2025 and was active for only three games after dealing with knee and ankle injuries. He did however see extensive time in 2024, when he played 384 snaps. He played under Vrabel in 2023. The team needs depth behind Byard and Woodson but expecting Mike Brown to fill that seems asinine barring a sudden breakout.

Former Buffalo Bills fullback Reggie Gilliam. Gilliam signed a three-year, \$10.8 million deal with the New England Patriots to be their starting fullback. PHOTO COURTESY OF @SLEDGE_ON INSTAGRAM.



SOFTBALL: HUSKIES LOOK TO REGROUP IN FIRST- EVER MEETING WITH NEW HAVEN



UConn softball plays against Stonehill College at Burrill Field in Storrs, Conn., on March 10, 2026. The Huskies won the game handily, 7-3. PHOTO BY PARKER MEYERS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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On Tuesday, March 24, the Huskies will host New Haven for a doubleheader non-conference showdown at Burrill Family Field in Storrs, Conn. The first game will start at 3:30 p.m. followed by another game at 6 p.m.

The Huskies will look to bounce back in this matchup,

following a three-game sweep by No. 9 Arkansas last weekend. The Huskies fell in six innings in the opening game, 12-4. Followed by another six-inning 10-2 loss. The series wrapped up with another dominant win by Arkansas, 9-4.

UConn struggled to contain Arkansas' offense and to maintain composure in high pressure situations. In the final game of the series, the Huskies showed greater dominance, taking an early lead and later bring-

ing the game to a 4-4 tie in the sixth inning. However, Arkansas quickly responded with a greater force of dominance with a five-run inning, including a grand slam, to take the win.

Despite the results of the series, key contributors showed their strengths throughout the games. Junior outfielder Kaitlyn Breslin was a key contributor at the plate, recording a multi-hit game in the last game of the series and helping drive in runs during key moments.

Freshman Emma Willers also proved to be a powerful force, recording multiple RBIs over the series. In the circle, freshman pitcher Caprice Bohmer had a strong start in the final game, limiting Arkansas to just two earned runs over 3.2 innings. The team showcased its competitive potential but will look to limit opponents' opportunities going forward.

The New Haven Chargers enter the matchup following a weekend series against Le Moyne,

where they finished with one win and two losses. The Chargers were shutout 9-0 in the opening game, bounced back with a 2-1 win in extra innings and then fell again 4-3 in the final game.

In game one, New Haven struggled to recover after allowing five runs in the opening inning. Junior catcher Brianna Trueman and sophomore infielder Elyse Genaway each recorded hits, but the Chargers were unable to capitalize on this.

In the second game, New Haven displayed their resilience, securing a 2-1 win in 10 innings. Sophomore pitcher Peyton Sullivan displayed dominance, pitching a complete game with just one run over the 10 innings. Offensively, Trueman gave the spark the Chargers needed with a solo home run. Senior infielder Lucia Ceccarelli sealed the win, scoring the game-winning run in the extra inning.

Despite a loss in the series' finale, the team once again showed resiliency. The team fought to erase an early 3-0 deficit with a three-RBI double from Trueman in the fifth inning to tie the game. They were unable to hold onto this momentum, allowing a homerun by Le Moyne in the eighth inning. Sophomore pitcher Katie Rhodes was dominant in relief, limiting Le Moyne and keeping the Chargers in the game.

Tuesday's matchup will be the first time the two teams compete against each other as New Haven previously competed at the Division II level.

Both teams will look to bounce back from two tough weekend series. Fans can turn into this historic matchup on FloSports.



UConn softball plays against Stonehill College at Burrill Field in Storrs, Conn., on March 10, 2026. The Huskies defeated the Skyhawks 7-3, improving to 7-16 on the season. PHOTO BY PARKER MEYERS, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS



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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL: PHOTO RECAP

The UConn Huskies play against the Syracuse Orange at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. The Huskies won with a final score of 98-45.

PHOTO BY CONNOR SHARP, PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

