COLETTE'S COMMENTARY:

AZZI FUDD GOES NO. 1 AS THE WNBA ENTERS A NEW ERA

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UConn showing up at the top of the WNBA Draft has almost become routine as the Huskies get the number one pick for the second year in a row with Azzi Fudd going No. 1 to the Dallas Wings. Fudd becomes the seventh WNBA top pick for the Huskies, showing the success of the program as they continue to develop players ready for the professional stage. Fudd's selection also captures something bigger: as salaries rise and the league gains visibility, players are entering a league that is finally evolving to meet them.

Recent increases in player salaries and league investment show a shift in the league that goes beyond draft night. After months of negotiations, the WNBA and Players' Association finally signed a Collective Bargaining Agreement. This agreement promises revenue sharing, which was one of the biggest points the players proposed. The players will also now have increased salaries, with them ranging from $270,000 to $1.4 million, and each team's cap will be at $7 million. The new deal also puts an increased focus on health and wellness by increasing medical staff requirements.

This year's draft represented increasing opportunities as this year's draft class enters the professional league at a moment marked by transformation. Draftees are entering the league at a time where they are finally getting recognized through monetization for their skills. For example, Fudd will receive a rookie salary six times greater than 2025 No. 1 pick Paige Bueckers due to the new deal signed. Bueckers earned $78,831 under her rookie season, while Fudd will earn about $500,000 under her rookie contract.

The growth of women's basketball was also shown as UCLA set a record with five first-round picks in the draft. The Bruins continued their record-breaking year, after winning the national championship for the first time in Bruins' history, with a record breaking six players drafted. Lauren Betts, Gabriela Jaquez and Kiki Rice were selected No. 4, 5, and 6, respectively. Betts was drafted by the Washington Mystics; Jaquez was then picked by the Chicago Sky, followed by Rice who was the first draft pick made by the expansion Toronto Tempo. Quickly following Angela Dugalic became the fourth draft pick from UCLA at No. 9 joining Betts at the Mystics. The Bruins then officially made history when Gianna Kneepkens was drafted by the Connecticut Sun as the 15th and final pick of the first round. The Huskies previously held the first-round record when four players were drafted in the first round, but with the last pick of the first round, the Bruins topped the record. Charlisse Leger-Walker finished off the Bruins historic draft night, when she was picked in the second round by the Sun, joining Kneepkens.

This year's WNBA Draft feels more like a reflection of how far the league has come and an ode to the previous draftees who have helped grow the league. From UConn's continued dominance to UCLA's record-breaking class, the talent entering the league is deeper and more prepared than ever. But for the first time, the infrastructure surrounding talent is beginning to catch up. With increased salaries, improved resources, and growing visibility, the WNBA is not just creating a space where players can continue their basketball careers but creating an environment where they can sustain long-term success. For elite players like Fudd and the rest of this year's draft class, the transition to the professional level is no longer just about opportunity, but about entering a league that is finally built to support it, truly captured in this year's draft.



Azzi Fudd poses for a photo with her new Dallas Wings jersey after being selected as the number 1 pick in this year's WNBA draft. She will now join former UConn WBB player Paige Bueckers, on the Dallas Wings. PHOTO COURTESY OF @AZZI25 ON INSTAGRAM.

The Weekly Power Play:

Breaking down each NHL division as regular season concludes

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The NHL playoffs kick off on Saturday, April 18, but there is still plenty of regular season action to come.

Here's a look at each division and where each team in a playoff position stands:

Eastern Conference:

In the Atlantic Division, the Tampa Bay Lightning, Buffalo Sabres and Montreal Canadiens have secured a spot in the playoffs. The Sabres clinched the division title with 108 points and defeated the Lightning last Monday with a score of 4-2 to secure a spot in the playoffs. This was an important win for Buffalo, who will be returning to playoff action for the first time since the 2010-11 season.

The Lightning and Canadiens both have 106 points now and will face off against each other in the first round. Which team will get home ice advantage is still to be determined.

All three teams have just four regular season games remaining with every point crucial in the close race. The Lighting and Canadiens faced off against each other last week with the Canadiens securing a 2-1 win. This was a great glimpse into playoff action for fans who will be seeing these two teams playing against each other again soon, with the stakes much higher.

Looking towards the Pacific Division, the Carolina Hurricanes clinched the division with a 6-5 overtime win against the Bruins on Tuesday and currently have 111 points. Behind them are the Pittsburgh Penguins (98) and the Philadelphia Flyers (96).

The Flyers jumped back into a playoff spot with two wins a few weekends ago, including a 2-1 overtime victory against the Boston Bruins. They won against the New Jersey Devils with a strong 5-1 score and recently secured a playoff spot.

The Penguins and Flyers will play each other in the first round with Pittsburgh having the home ice advantage.

As far as the East Wild Card goes, the Boston Bruins are locked in on first place with 101 points and will face the Buffalo Sabres in the first round. The Bruins have much more experience in the playoffs in recent years than the Sabres. The two teams faced off against each other in March with the Bruins taking home a 4-3 overtime victory.

Western Conference:

Leading the Central Division and the entire league is the Colorado Avalanche with 117 points. The Avalanche clinched the Central Division as well as the Western Conference after their 3-1 win against the St. Louis Blues on Tuesday. The team recently won the President's Trophy for the most wins in the entire league.

The Dallas Stars currently sit in second place with 110 points and the Minnesota Wild in third (102). Both teams have secured a spot in the playoffs and will face off against one another in the Western Conference First Round. It is still to-be-determined as to who will have home ice advantage, so the race to secure second place is crucial for each team.

Looking at the Pacific Division, the Vegas Golden Knights sit in first place with 93 points. The Edmonton Oliers are right behind them with 91 points. The Anaheim Ducks currently sit in third place with 90 points and have a chance at surpassing the Oilers.

In the West Conference Wild Card, the Utah Mammoth are in first place with 90 points. The Los Angeles Kings are right behind them with 89 points, so it will be a tight race to first place with just a few days left before the playoffs.

Close races are within each conference and each wild card with the amount of time left to secure a playoff spot dwindling. Fans should keep an eye out on their favorite team in a spot of their playoff as there is still plenty of regular season hockey left and anything can happen.

LOGO BY ALEXA PAPPAS, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS



The Vegas Golden Knights celebrate after they beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-2 on April 11, 2026. The Vegas Golden Knights sit in first place with 93 points in the Pacific Division. PHOTO COURTESY OF @VEGASGOLDENKNIGHTS ON INSTAGRAM