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
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
SHE/HER/HERS
meredith.lloyd@uconn.edu

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 breaststroke 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 freestyle, 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

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

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 women'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.

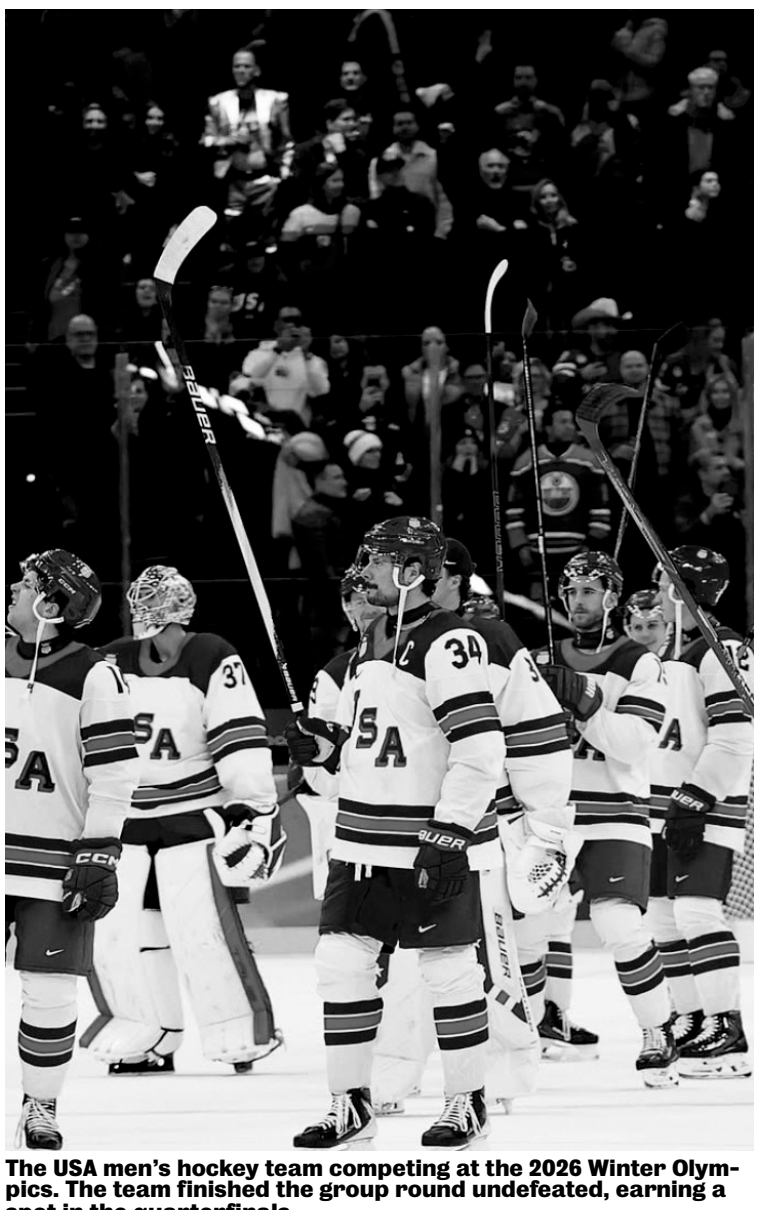
Sullivan described Q. Hughes as a "gamechanger" in an article from NHL.com and elaborated more on his integral style of play on the blue line.

"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 @USAHOCKEY ON INSTAGRAM