

GRADUATION DAY...



COMICS

CARTOON BY SAM HASS,
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DAILY CAMPUS

TOP SUPER SMASH BROS. TOURNAMENTS IN CONNECTICUT THIS SUMMER

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With work schedules, internships and vacation plans, summer breaks in college aren't always the most restful. Still, if you find yourself bored and with some free time, it can be a great opportunity to find new hobbies or activities to participate in.

If you've ever enjoyed playing Super Smash Bros., Nintendo's crossover platform fighter video game, it may be worth exploring Connecticut's active competitive tournament scene this summer. Yes, it's true: the game built on characters like Mario and Pikachu battling to the end has a pretty devoted community, including in Connecticut.

The game most widely competed in is Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, the most recent entry to the series, first released on the Nintendo Switch in late 2018. But there are regular tournaments for Super Smash Bros. Melee as well, which was released on GameCube in 2001. The older game features a much smaller roster and controls that are more difficult but rewarding to master.

Most tournaments require some kind of venue fee and a tournament entry that contributes to a prize pool. Entered players then compete in a bracket, typically in a double-elimination format with a loser's bracket. However, smaller events may opt for round robin brackets instead, where each player gets to play against everyone else in the tournament. Most brackets are hosted on a website called start.gg, which requires making a free account before registering for events.

To minimize random mechanics in a competitive environment, most tournaments have a definitive ruleset that bans items and limits stages to a select few that's most fit for fair competition. However, some tournaments may run additional brackets with lower stakes and more liberal rulesets.

If you do choose to enter a Super Smash Bros. tournament this summer, be prepared! You

will likely be expected to bring your own controller, though some venues may have extras to borrow.

Tournaments can be a fun way to spend a few hours with friends, or you can choose to enter an event yourself and meet new people. At weekly events, there is usually time before and after the bracket to play on the setups, so your playing experience isn't limited to the tournament competition itself.

If any of this sounds interesting to you, here's a brief overview of the main weekly and monthly tournaments that'll be hosted in Connecticut over the summer break.

Hall of Gaming (Wallingford)

Hall of Gaming is a video game space at 150 Center St. in Wallingford. It runs tournaments for Super Smash Bros. Ultimate on Mondays and for Super Smash Bros. Melee on Thursdays, with both brackets starting at 7:30 p.m. It's the largest weekly tournament series in the state when it comes to entrants, and if you get knocked out early, you have the ability to join a "redemption bracket" to get more tournament matches in.

Hall of Gaming also runs tournaments for other fighting games on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, including games like Street Fighter 6, Tekken 8 and more. Because of this, the venue is open on Mondays to Fridays, from 6 p.m. to midnight.

You can find more information about Hall of Gaming on its website.

East Side Games (New London)

East Side Games hosts singles and doubles (where two teams of two players compete) for Super Smash Bros. Ultimate tournaments on Thursdays. Doors for the event open at 5 p.m. and brackets start at 6 p.m. or 7 p.m.

This Thursday, April 30, will mark its first tournament with its new location at Sarge's Comics and Games in New London, located at 124 State St. The series went on a temporary hiatus after its prior venue, the Crystal Mall in New London, closed down.

More information about East Side Games can be found on its Facebook page.

Reboot (Norwalk)

Reboot hosts singles and doubles brackets for Super Smash Bros. every Thursday in Norwalk at 165 Water St. Doors for the event open at 6 p.m. and the singles bracket starts at 7 p.m.

More information about Reboot tournaments can be found on its weekly start.gg pages.

The Pink Flamingo (Brookfield)

The Pink Flamingo is a newer tournament at 499 Federal

Road in Brookfield that runs weekly "Super Smash Bros. Ultimate" singles and doubles tournaments on Saturdays. The event has a check-in at 6 p.m. and the tournament begins at 7 p.m.

More information about The Pink Flamingo can be found in its Discord server.

Smash & Sip (Southington)

Smash & Sip is a monthly event held by Gamer's Guild at Factory Square in Southington, located at 168 Center St. The event is typically held toward the end of each month and features a singles bracket for Su-

per Smash Bros. Ultimate. The venue opens at 1 p.m. and the bracket starts around 2:30 p.m.

More information about Smash & Sip can be found on its Facebook page.

Alongside these tournaments, there are plenty of others in New York, Massachusetts and the rest of New England that aren't too far from certain spots in Connecticut. If you're interested in getting more involved in the scene, a lot of communication about tournaments is done through Discord servers, which can be found online.

What to do at the end of your sophomore year

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Despite what the recently turbulent weather may have you believe, the 2025-2026 academic year at the University of Connecticut is almost over. Last year, I capped off my freshman year with a retrospective on what I had learned and hoped to bring with me into fall 2025. This time around, I'll be applying the same thought process to my sophomore year as we approach the end.

Pick and choose

Notably, college is the best time for trying things out. There is a seemingly infinite number of clubs here at UConn, and every single one is worth someone's time, somewhere. As for what's worth your time? Let me know when you figure it out, because I haven't yet.

With classes, clubs, work and other obligations, your plate will fill incredibly fast. After you've done the work of finding your people in whatever organization you're a part of, you might notice that your free time has suddenly vanished now that you've committed to your new groups. Unfortunately, it might be time to sort things out.

I've had my most success with organizing my obligations by ranking them in terms of what I'd pick first in the event there's any conflict between them — this has mostly helped with events, as it means I'll always know what to go to.

Find a way to get sleep

This might be the most obvious entry on my list. Sleep is hard to come by in college, especially if you're committed to living in the moment. Most people are only here for four years, so it might be difficult to pass up on the more exciting opportunities, but unfortunately everyone needs sleep to live.

For most people, it might be best to just accept that eight hours of sleep is going to be a rare occurrence if you somehow haven't already come to that realization. Despite that, I'm a huge proponent of finding just one day a week to get a full night's sleep. I've been a fairly consistent "in bed around midnight, up at 7:45 a.m." person, and



Homer Babbidge Library is UConn's primary library on campus. Located on Fairfield Way, it serves as many students go-to study spot during their finals preparations. PHOTO BY ALEXANDER RENZULLI, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

when I don't meet that standard, it usually means I'm up much later.

For the people who have hung out with me past midnight this semester, I thank you for your time and the memories, but I'm feeling the consequences now. 3 a.m. might be better off without me.

If you can find yourself one night a week where you can get a better night's sleep, do it. You can't run yourself ragged constantly, so find time to take a break.

Stay organized

I see myself as a fairly on-top-of-my-stuff student. While I've certainly had moments when I've turned in work just a few minutes before the deadline, this isn't too often as to be uncomfortable. Unfortunately, I had a rude awakening when I completely missed the ball on an essay and skipped past the deadline entirely.

If anyone's curious, I did turn it in last week — 15 days past due. I wish I could say I had learned something, but my professor gave me a 90, so I can only assume this will reinforce my own bad behavior.

I share this not to encourage submitting late assignments but rather to illustrate my point that you can be incredibly good at squeezing work in and keeping on top of stuff naturally, but if you don't have a system set up to catch you when you fall, you'll miss something eventually.

So for this lesson, I'd advise getting into the habit of writing everything down. Your own brain

will fail you eventually, so start relying on calendars and notes instead. I've had bullet journals or sticky notes recommended to me, but right now I've been slowly integrating my calendar and notes into Notion. Maybe in a year I'll have another article sharing whether or not this worked.

Find time for you

Everyone preaches the importance of self-care until they get busy with the things they care about. If you need to find a way to slow down every once in a while, I'd advise finding a hobby that you can do by yourself.

For me, this has been reading comics. Anyone who knows me knows I've developed a strong love for Batman in the past year, and I'd be remiss not to mention how it's helped me relax. When your work is also your passion, it can be tough to close the laptop and turn your brain off for a few moments, but finding something to read without needing to engage every part of my brain has been incredibly beneficial.

If you've found your free time to be a little dull, maybe find something easy to engage with every once in a while. It might motivate you to slow down and relax.

This might be difficult during this time of year, but I do encourage anyone reading to find some time to put your work down. It's nice to have a calming task to look forward to. But for now, remember you've got this, and good luck on finals!



People playing in a Smash Bros. tournament. Reconnecting with local gaming clubs is a great way to get involved with your community. PHOTO COURTESY OF PLANET NETWORK ON FACEBOOK