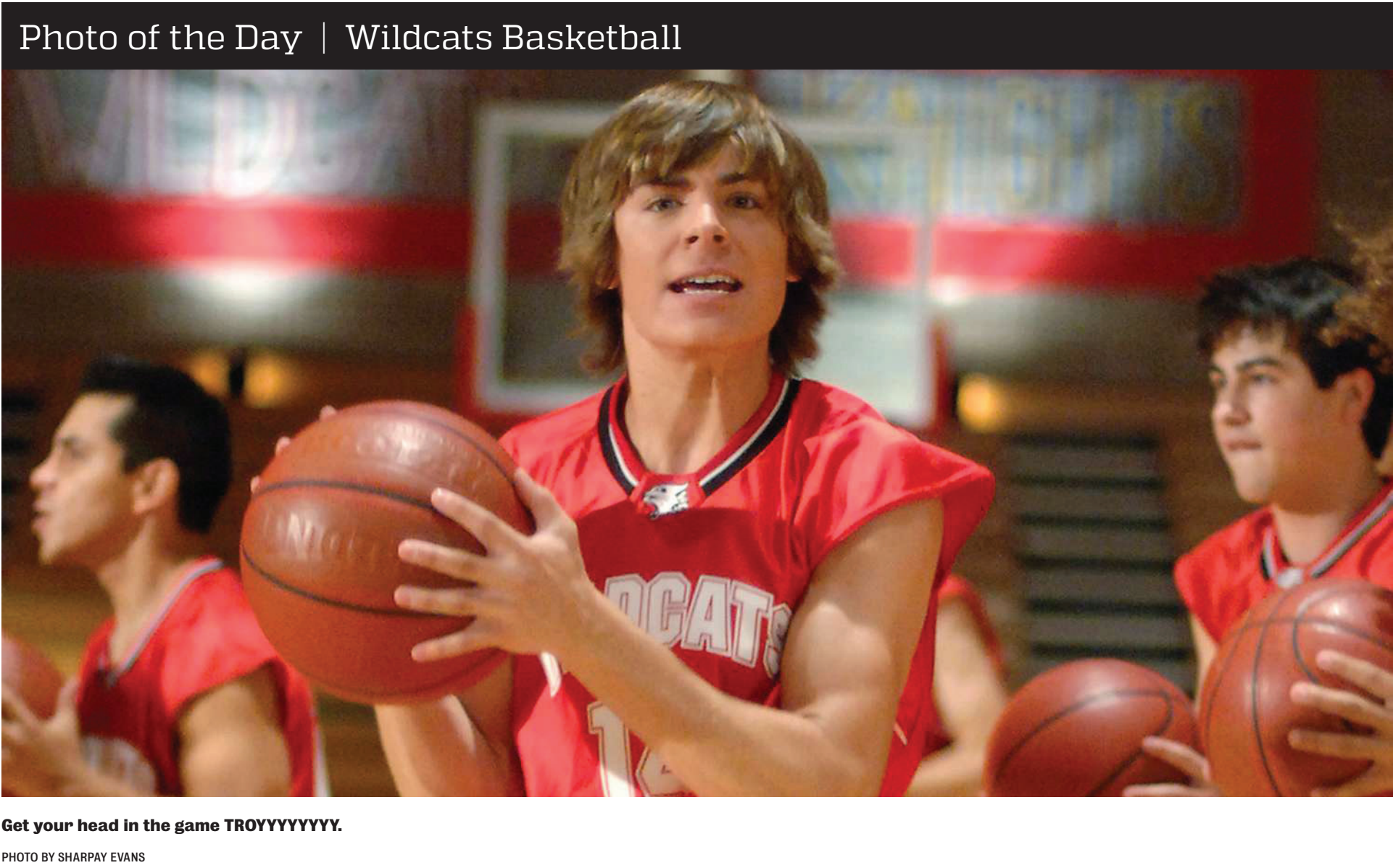




UConn Wins 30-20 in Spring Exhibition Game Against New York Jets

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This past weekend, the New York Jets of the National Football League hosted the UConn Huskies in a standalone spring exhibition game to help both teams stay fresh for next season.

For UConn, this was the first game in a new era of UConn football. It was Jason Candle's first game as head coach for his new school following the departure of Jim Mora, as well as QB Jake Merklinger's first start with the Huskies after Joe Fagnano declared for the NFL draft.

For New York, the team is looking at how their roster will fare for next season with the addition of quarterback Geno Smith and numerous new defensive upgrades. The Jets did not record an interception this past year, and per NFL insider

Aiden Scheffler, the team believed that their only chance at an interception was to get one against a collegiate team.

The teams played the game in MetLife stadium in East Rutherford, New York, in front of a crowd of approximately four people. If you missed this game, you're not alone, as it was scheduled during UConn's basketball game against Duke.

The first quarter began with a bang, as UConn returned the opening kickoff for a touchdown. New York would do the same on the ensuing kick return.

By the end of the first quarter the two teams were knotted at 10 apiece. The game looked like it would be a thriller for the fan in the crowd.

The second quarter saw the teams exchanging punts and occasional drives. UConn managed to intercept Smith late in the quarter and eventually

scored a touchdown to take a 17-10 lead heading into the half-time show headlined by Imagine Dragons.

After the performance both sides prepared for a crucial third quarter, starting with the Jets receiving the ball. New York was only able to score a field goal on the drive.

With UConn set to receive the kickoff at 10:32 left in the third quarter, the Huskies requested a stoppage to tune into the men's basketball game. Jets' head coach Aaron Glenn approved the request, and the teams spent the next hour watching the second half of the game, followed by a celebration on the field.

Once things settled down, it was back to business. UConn, fired up by Braylon Mullins' game-winning shot, tore up the Jets' defense en route to a quick touchdown to give them a 24-13

lead, a score which would hold until about halfway through the fourth quarter.

With just six minutes on the clock, Jets running back Breece Hall broke downfield for a 67-yard touchdown run that would allow the Jets to climb back into the game at a score of 24-20. Now filled with hope, the Jets' defense was ready to lock things down and turn the tide.

Merklinger had no answer for the defense for the next drive, with UConn only able to stall out a few minutes of clock before being forced to punt. New York struggled to do much but would force another Husky punt on their next drive, giving the Jets the ball at their own 43 with just over a minute left.

New York pulled out all the stops but could not convert on their first three downs, and with no timeouts left they were left with only the option to

throw a Hail Mary and try and win the game.

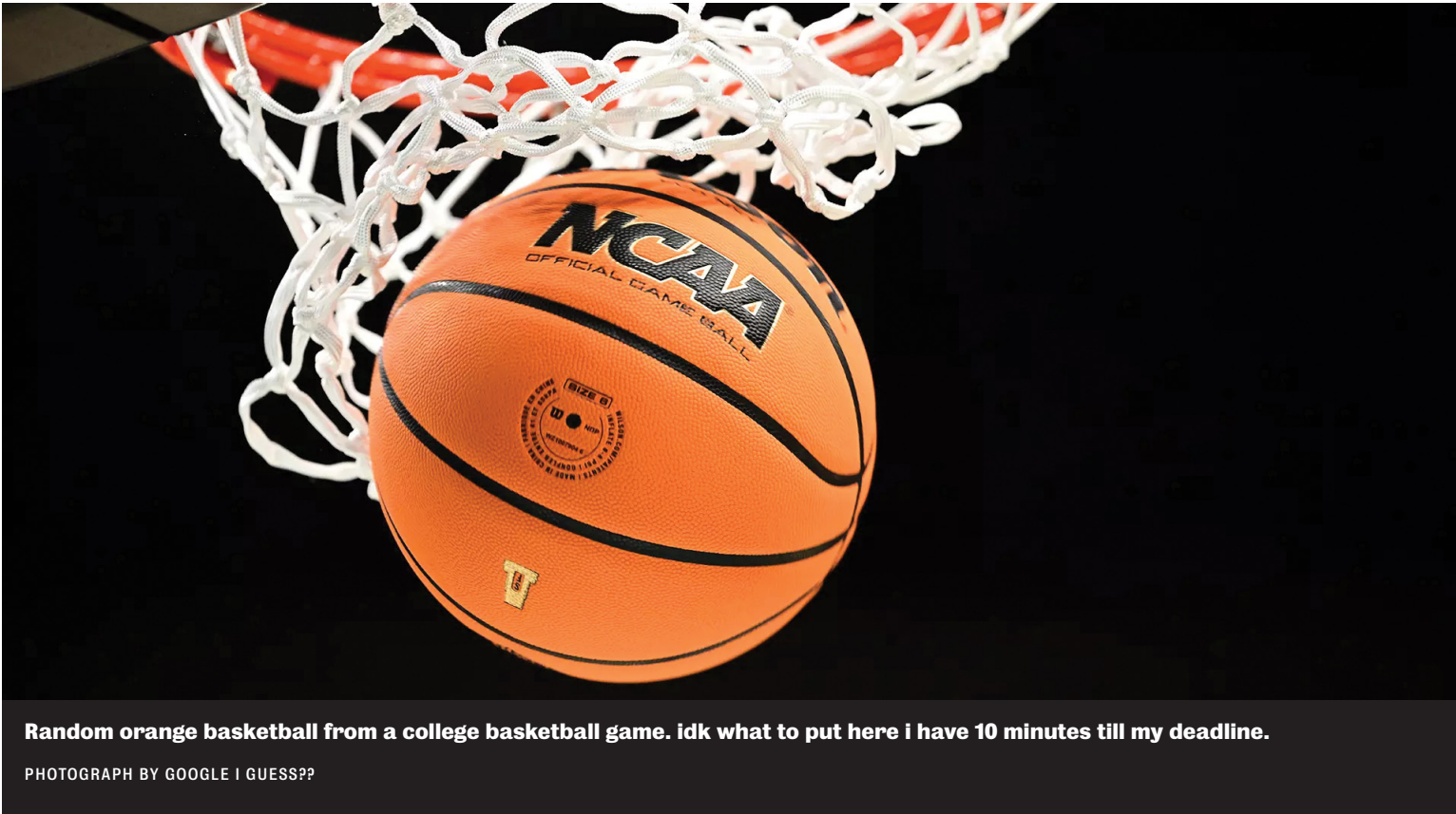
The ball was snapped, Smith fired it downfield into the end-zone where it would be picked off and run all the way back for a Husky touchdown with zeroes on the clock to seal a 30-20 UConn victory.

For UConn, they start the new era of their program on a high note, taking down an NFL team and putting the rest of the nation on notice of the Huskies. They will host a spring game on April 11th at the Rent.

For the Jets, they still are yet to have an interception since January of 2025. GM Darren Mougey attempted to offer Garrett Wilson for Merklinger after the game but was turned down.

New York is projected by all major outlets to take UConn QB Joe Fagnano with the second overall pick in this year's draft.

NCAA TO ADOPT 5-POINT SHOT IN MARCH MADNESS STARTING IN 2027



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As if March Madness could not get any crazier, the NCAA is finalizing a rule to add a five-point shot to the tournament.

This rule would start for the 2027 tournament and add another level of excitement to the game.

ESPN Analyst Chuck Networkorthy voiced his opinions on the rule change, saying, "I think it is beneficial for the sport. It will further advance the game of basketball and its exactly what fans want to see."

The shot will be just like any

other; the only change is the location. The shot must be taken from beyond half court and go off before the buzzer or shot clock expires. This adds another level to the game as teams could potentially plan plays or defenses to protect or attack the shot.

With halfcourt heaves and last second buzzer beaters playing a role in the Madness, adding a higher value to a longer shot could be just what teams need to recover from a 10-point deficit. The game could elevate to another level with teams putting up even crazier shots.

"Crazier shots mean more highlights, and more highlights means more viewers," said

ESPN broadcaster Ally Ooper-son.

In the past five tournaments, there have been at least 12 notable buzzer beaters that sent programs into the next round. With the new rule, that number should skyrocket as teams often find themselves in trouble late needing multiple shots to form a comeback. Instead of two possession games with a four- or five-point lead, the new shot will allow teams to erase the deficit with a halfcourt prayer.

The excitement of March starts with players making many three pointers or long-distance shots. The five-

point shot will have players on hot streaks seeking a chance to erase their team's deficit or possibly build their lead.

Fans want to see close games, and when desperation builds, teams rely on last-ditch three-point shots.

Coach Whistleton of the UConn Hype-skies supports the new rule change, giving his team a chance to put up points quickly.

"We already own March. This rule can make us dominate the sport even more. I might need to start mandating this shot into our everyday practice, so we're ready for the postseason," Whistleton said.

The NIL has been a core problem as to why Cinderella runs are not as common anymore. Since players often transfer and relocate teams, the smaller ones lack some big-time stars. This rule can give those teams a better chance now with a single shot erasing multiple possessions. Two halfcourt shots made and a 10-point deficit is erased. The game is elevating, and the NCAA is always trying to improve it.

After years of the four-point shot possibly being added to the NBA, the NCAA jumped on the opportunity to create their own unique rule. Cinderella teams always seem to catch fire with a few distance shooters finding the bottom of the net. If point values are raised, who says they won't take a shot from a few more feet back?

The 5-point shot rule will be finalized following the 2026 NCAA National Championship game. The new shot will create even more chaos and madness entering March with paw-sitively wild heaves.

Coaches are already recruiting "Halfcourt Heroes" and "Longshot Legends," as next year's tournament promises more excitement.

As always, brackets will get busted; egos will be bruised, but now March Madness will never be the same.

Sit back and relax—this tournament just got 'five' times crazier.

And if you can't wait around till next year, check the date... April Fools! Go Huskies!

(Maybe start practicing that 5-point shot)