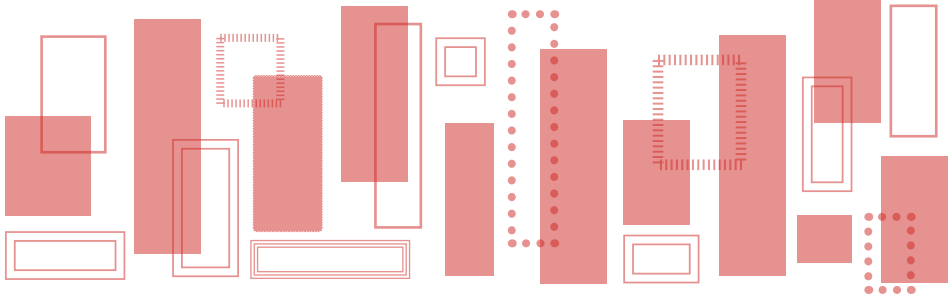




Sports



POINT/COUNTERPOINT: WHO WILL WIN THE SUPER BOWL?

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In this week's rendition of the Point/Counterpoint, Thaddeus Sawyer and Jake Loomis argue who will win the Super Bowl this weekend.

Will it be the former Patriots division rival Sam Darnold and the Seattle Seahawks or the Drake Maye and the New England Patriots Cinderella Story?

Seahawks
Superbowl LX's biggest storyline is the revenge game scenario for resurgent former New York Jets Sam Darnold, who has transformed into a top 10 quarterback.

Prior to this season, such a statement would seem ludicrous. First, it assumes the Seahawks would reach the Superbowl, far from a lock after they missed the playoffs in 2024 in a stacked NFC. Second, Darnold threw away a lot of the goodwill accumulated from a solid year with Minnesota in 2024 when he took nine sacks in the Vikings' first round playoff loss.

However, Darnold's 2025 stats put him among the best in the league.

The eighth-year pro ranked fifth in passing yards and seventh in touchdowns. He also placed seventh in completion percentage and 11th in passer rating while averaging 8.5 yard per passing attempt, showing that the first-year Seahawk is doing more than just accumulating numbers.

Darnold has kept that production up in the postseason. Over three games, he's completed 69.8% of his passes and hasn't been intercepted. Darnold has only taken a combined five sacks over that span.

Much of Darnold's path to the Superbowl is true for Patriots quarterback Drake Maye as well.

There's no doubt that Maye is a better quarterback than Darnold. The MVP finalist threw for the fourth most yards and third most touchdowns in the NFL, while securing the high-

est completion percentage and passer rating in the league at 113.5.

Where the two QBs' routes diverge is in their playoff performance.

Maye has eclipsed a passer rating over 100 just once this postseason. His Wild Card Round passer rating against the Los Angeles Chargers of 86.6 would have placed him in the same echelon as Spencer Rattler and Geno Smith during the regular season.

In the Championship Round against the Denver Broncos, his 58.8 passer rating would have left him below Shedeur Sanders and J.J. McCarthy and just ahead of Brady Cook.

While weather has certainly factored into the sharp decline, Maye has been closer to a liability than a contributor this postseason.

Maye's performance dip has come against three teams who were all top 11 in team sacks in 2025. The Seahawks came in at eight with 47, the same mark as Patriots Divisional Round opponent, the Houston Texans.

After taking more than four sacks on only three occasions during the regular season, Maye has taken five sacks in each playoff game. Like many, Maye struggles when facing increased pressure. One of the Patriots' only losses came in week three against the Pittsburgh Steelers, a game in which Maye took five sacks.

For the Patriots, it isn't as easy as neutralizing one player. The Seahawks had three players reach a team-high seven sacks. Seventeen different players recorded at least a half sack.

If the Patriots offensive line holds up, there's a chance Maye recaptures his regular season form.

If that isn't the case, and Dar-



nold maintains his season-long consistency, a two-score win for a Seahawks team with far more momentum seems likely.

Patriots
Most may label them as underdogs, although this year's revamped Patriots should not be overlooked in this year's Super Bowl.

This year's Patriots do have what it takes to win it all, and it all starts up front with their massive D-Line that anchors the defense. This defense has been spectacular for New England and will need to continue their great play if they want to slow down Seattle's balanced attack.

They will also need to push quarterback Sam Darnold into making some bad throws similar to his time with the Jets, where the Patriots owned him. Jaxson Smith Njigba will also be a feature for New England's defense, as we will get to see Christian Gonzales follow him around all game. This might be one of the best pairings that we have seen between a cornerback and a wide receiver in a long time.

Offensively, New England is led by Drake Maye, and he will be the key to New England winning it all.

Maye has been exceptional in the playoffs, especially when using his legs, and his arm has been on the back burner as he has had shoulder issues following the AFC Championship game. Maye will also need to lean on veteran Stefan Diggs in the red zone and crucial third-down situations.

Regardless of what happens with Seattle, New England is the underdog, but fans should not worry about the squad winning on Sunday, especially with a coach like Mike Vrabel leading the team.

Drake Maye of the New England Patriots holds up the AFC Championship trophy. The Patriots play the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, Feb. 8 in the Superbowl. PHOTO COURTESY OF @PATRIOTS ON INSTAGRAM

Men's Ice Hockey: UConn to face Northeastern in final 2025-2026 in-conference meeting

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The No. 12 UConn men's hockey team (15-7-3, 9-5-1) will travel to clash with the Northeastern Huskies (12-12-1, 7-9-0) for the final 2025-2026 in-conference meeting.

Coming into tonight's contest, Connecticut is favored to win. Despite owning an overall 13-15 record, dating back to the 2014-2015 season, they have won the last four games.

In the two programs' previous outings, UConn swept the Northeastern Huskies in a two-game series in November.

In Game 1, two players scored goals to help UConn in their 4-2 victory.

Paving the way, Jake Percival secured a hat-trick. Behind the forward, Ethan Gardula drained a goal.

With 11 and a half minutes remaining in the matchup, Connecticut escaped overtime with two netters by Percival after Northeastern tied the fight 2-2.

By the end of the battle, both teams took 35 shots apiece. While Northeastern's accuracy struggled with a 5.7% shooting percentage, Connecticut finished the night with an 11.4% shooting percentage.

Defensively, UConn tallied 12 blocks, whereas the Hockey East rivals swatted away nine



UConn men's hockey competes against the University of New Hampshire at Toscana Family Ice Forum on Nov. 22, 2025. The Huskies ended the night with a 4-1 win. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

potential goals.

In the net, Tyler Muszelik saved 33 shots for Connecticut, while Lawton Zacher denied 33 shots.

Turning to Game 2, the same story was told. Through three periods and overtime, both squads kept the match close.

With just over 15 minutes left in the showdown, Percival clutched up for UConn once again and cashed in a goal to force extra time.

In overtime, Joey Muldowney scored to give Connecticut a close 4-3 triumph.

Collectively, UConn outshot the Northeastern Huskies 34-19 with a shot percentage of 11.8%. Unlike Game 1, Northeastern flipped the switch and finished with a 15.8% shooting percentage.

Scouting Northeastern

Hockey:

Heading into tonight's bout, Northeastern is coming off a four-game losing streak.

In the team's most recent meeting with the Boston University Terriers, the Huskies fell in an intense 2-1 shootout.

For Northeastern, Dylan Hryckowian kept the pressure on goaltender Mikhail Yegorov, targeting the net five times.

With a little under nine and a half minutes left in the first period, the junior contributed the first points of the contest during a power play. The forward also assisted in Jacob Mathieu's late second-period goal, giving the Huskies a 2-1 lead.

Scouting UConn Hockey:
After bringing the CT Ice Cup back to Storrs, Conn., UConn looks to add to its two-game winning streak.

One player to keep an eye on is Muldowney, who could stay hot offensively. Currently, the forward has netted the puck in the squad's last two clashes.

Something worth acknowledging is Connecticut snagging in faceoffs. While facing the Quinnipiac Bobcats in the CT Ice finals, the Bobcats won 37 faceoffs, whereas UConn only grabbed 22.

For those interested, fans can tune into the Hockey East showdown today on ESPN+ with the puck drop scheduled for 7 p.m.

The Big Game: Everything you need to know to watch Super Bowl LX

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This Sunday, Feb. 8, the New England Patriots and Seattle Seahawks will face off from Levi's Stadium in the San Francisco Bay for one of the biggest sporting events of the year – the Super Bowl.

We're breaking down every key play, so you're all set to enjoy your Super Sunday.

Where can I tune into the Big Game?

This year, Super Bowl LX will be broadcast on NBC stations. In Connecticut, that may mean you are watching on WVIT Channel 30 Hartford, WWLP Channel 22 Springfield or WNBC Channel 4 New York.

If you're using a TV streaming service or cable app, log in using your provider's credentials (such as Comcast Xfinity or Charter Spectrum) and choose the station you usually watch NBC programming on. If you don't currently subscribe to a TV provider, Peacock and NFL Plus will be webcasting the game on a delay.

On the radio, you can hear the live broadcast on Westwood One Sports affiliates, including WUCS FM 97.9 Windsor Locks-Hartford, WAVZ AM 1300 New Haven and WEEI FM 93.7 Boston. If you subscribe to Sirius XM satellite radio or TuneIn Premium streaming radio, the game will also be available on their NFL channels.

Kick-off is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. ET. The game always starts a little later but make sure to be tuned in by then.

Pre-game and halftime entertainment

The lead-up to the feature presentation kicks off at 12 p.m. with the "Road to the Super Bowl" special, featuring highlights and cinematic moments from this past season.

Starting at 1 p.m., NBC's "Football Night in America" team begins their full pre-game analysis, culminating in the opening ceremony at 6 p.m.

California punk-rock band Green Day will help get the party started with a performance to "commemorate the Super Bowl's six-decade legacy," and 11-time Grammy winner Brandi Carlile will perform "America the Beautiful" as part of the celebration. Singer-songwriter Charlie Puth will sing the national anthem.

"I actually have always wanted to do this, and I recorded a little demo," Puth said in an interview with Rolling Stone. "I've been told Jay-Z loved it, and it got to [NFL Commissioner] Roger Goodell and they all said that I could do it."

After two quarters on the gridiron, Latin hip-hop artist Bad Bunny will headline the halftime show, sponsored by Apple Music. He's taking the stage just a week after winning Album of the Year at the Grammys for "Debi Tirar Más Fotos."

For serious fans, NFL Network

will provide extensive coverage with "NFL Game Day Morning" starting at 9 a.m. with commentary on the most updated news shaping the game.

Commercial breaks
The advertising during the Super Bowl is mythical. Corporations spend top dollar in the hopes they'll inspire viewers to purchase their products and patronize their services — with Big Game ads becoming some of the most memorable moments on television.

Superbowl-Ads.com, a webpage dedicated to archiving and discussing these commercials, has announced some of this year's campaigns will include George Clooney promoting the Grubhub food delivery service, Pepsi stoking the "Cola wars" with polar bears — Coca-Cola's longtime mascots — in a "blind taste test," and Sabrina Carpenter eating Pringles with "Pringleleo," amongst others.

There are also some newcomers to the Super Bowl ad arena, like electrolyte drink mix Liquid IV, featuring K-Pop Demon Hunters' Ejae singing Phil Collins' 1984 hit "Against All Odds," Comcast Xfinity with a "Jurassic Park" throwback featuring Jeff Goldblum and the Ferrero Group, showing its Kinder Bueno and Nutella chocolate confections "blasting off" into outer space.

According to the Associated Press, State Farm has secured the first advertising spot after kick-off, and reported that 30-second national placements sold for as much as \$10 million this year.

There will also be a lot of local advertising, like those from Connecticut businesses, car dealerships and schools like UConn. Don't miss them — special promotions and perks could be waiting just for you!

After the Final Whistle
As with many live sports, it is uncertain when the Big Game will actually end, but it's most likely to finish around 10:30 p.m.

Immediately after the conclusion of the Vince Lombardi trophy ceremony and the "Football Night in America" postgame show, NBC will continue its coverage of the Winter Olympics from Milan, chronicling the women's downhill in Alpine skiing, the men's free skate in the figure skating team event and more. A late local newscast is scheduled for 12 a.m. midnight.

For further analysis after the game, ESPN's Scott van Pelt will host "SportsCenter" and NFL Network will broadcast "Game Day Final" to discuss the results. WFSB Channel 3 will conclude its special "Road to the Championship" Patriots coverage as part of Eyewitness News at 11 p.m.

Enjoy the Game!

That's the game plan. Load up on snacks, round up your crew and settle in for the Big Game — whether you're watching every play, every commercial or just here for the vibes, hopefully our guide helps you be prepared to enjoy this year's Super Bowl!



Bad Bunny and Rauw Alejandro posing for a picture at the Grammys. Bad Bunny won Album of the Year for "Debi Tirar Más Fotos." PHOTO COURTESY OF @GRAMMYS ON INSTAGRAM.