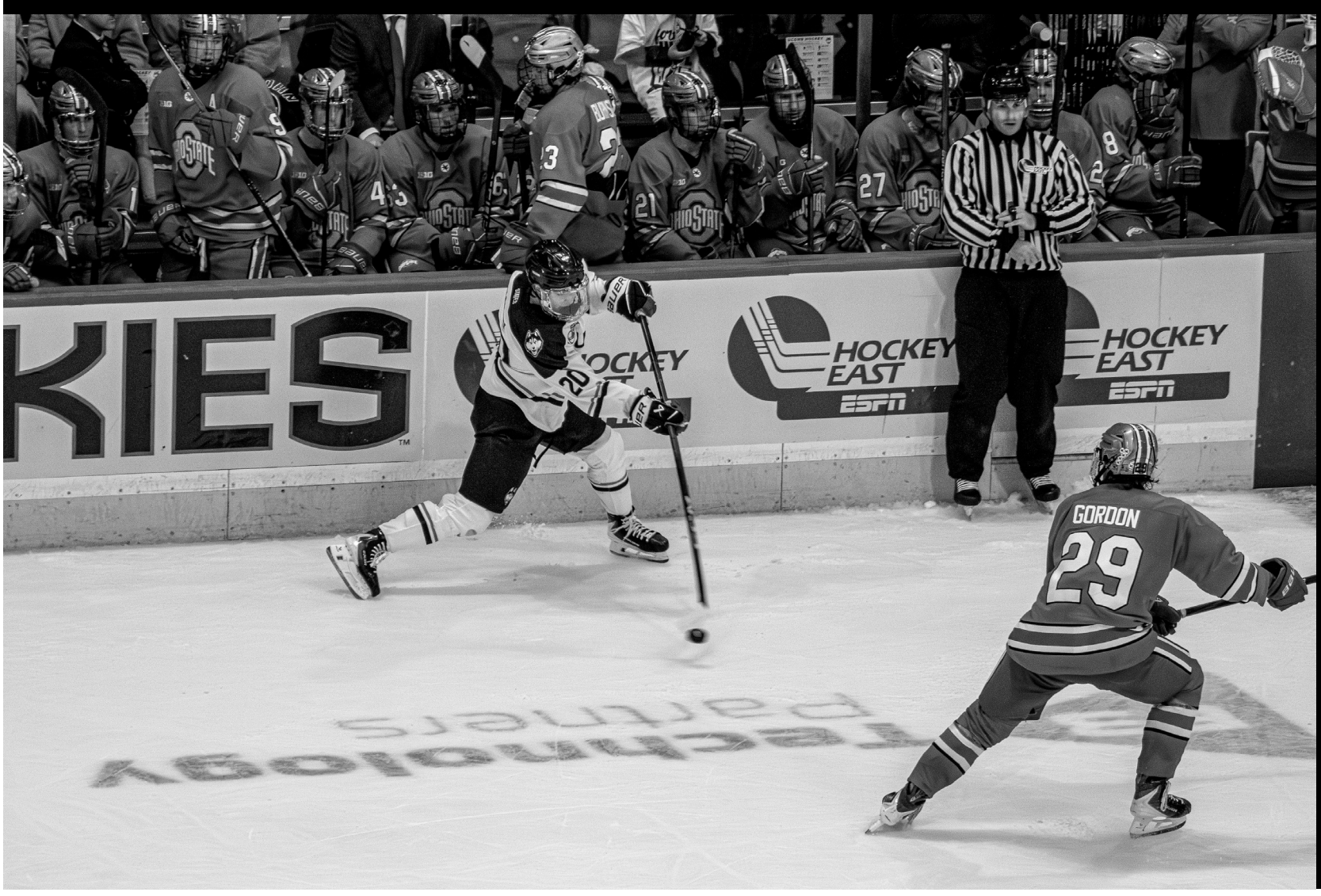
Sports

Photo of the Day | Men's hockey



UConn men's hockey faces Ohio State on Oct. 18, 2025, at Peoples-Bank Arena in Hartford, CT. The Huskies lost 4-2 to the Buckeyes.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH TURNER, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THE MARCH TO APRIL: PARITY WILL RUIN YOUR BRACKET, BUT IT WON'T RUIN YOUR VIEWING EXPERIENCE

by Jake McCreven
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
jpm23012@uconn.edu



No. 1 Arizona's Wildcats holds the longest winning streak in Big 12. Wildcats player is getting ready to face off against No. 9 Kansas. Photo courtesy of @arizonambb on Instagram. PHOTO COURTESY OF @ARIZONAMBB ON INSTAGRAM

You'll probably find out the hard way anyways, so here's a little preemptive truth telling: you won't pick a perfect bracket next month. Nobody will. It's as close to impossible as convincing a baseball fan that college basketball rules the roost until April.

Saturday alone warranted such pessimism.

Oklahoma, a grisly 1-9 in SEC play entering the day, led ranked Vanderbilt by 19 at the final media timeout. The Sooners only won by a point. Staying in the southeast, Texas A&M, oddly enough, entered the day at first place only to get shelled by Florida on its home court.

Nos. 3, 4 and 5 in the AP Poll (UConn, Duke, Illinois) all lost within a span of 24 hours despite being favored on its opponent's court.

Nebraska is still ranked inside the top 10 of all polls.

You see? There are too many moving parts to be perfect (unless you're Arizona or Miami-Ohio, of course). Weekly regular season power surges aren't even factored into your 1 in 9.1 quintillion chances to select every post season game correctly, according to the NCAA.

Those odds decrease to a digestible 1 in 120.2 billion if you have common knowledge of the college basketball landscape.

But as a fan, not as a bracketologist, this unprecedented parity is a godsend for the sport. There's a group of 12 to 15 teams that are firmly in the national title race in the middle of February, and even more who can make a run at a Final Four.

Again, look at Saturday; North Carolina's identity as a big game belly flopper was rewritten by Seth Trimble's buzzer beater against nemesis Duke. Illinois freshman phenom Keaton Wagler was held to a 2-of-16 mark from the field but still had the ball in his hands with a chance to beat or tie Michigan State in East Lansing in the final seconds.

And then there's the Big 12. Utter anarchy. Undefeated Arizona, amidst the largest win streak in program history, is the flag bearer. Meanwhile, Iowa State (21-2), Houston (21-2) and Kansas (18-5) are all in the top 10 of the AP Poll while Texas Tech, anchored by Player of the Year candidate JT Toppin, sits in fifth place with a win over Duke under its belt.

Yeah, you aren't picking every game correctly. So don't try.

Don't pick a No. 13 over a No. 4 if you don't think any of the 13's can pick off a Power 5 runner up. Don't pick a No. 12 over a No. 5 just because it's trendy. The best way to fill out a March Madness bracket is blindfolded, remember.

Pick your teams and stick with them. There's no science, no analytic, no predictive metric that can anticipate the outcome of these games that factors in the raw, untamed emotion of March, and with parity at an all-time high across the sport, unpredictability has increased tenfold.

We as fans should welcome parity with open arms, not reject it out of greed to pick a perfect bracket.