LATO'S LENS:

UPSETS, TOP PERFORMERS, AND MUST-SEE MATCHUPS FOR THIS WEEK IN COLLEGE BASKETBALL

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This next week of college basketball features what might be the best slate of games in the entire regular season: No. 1 Michigan versus No. 3 Duke, No. 4 Arizona versus No. 8 Kansas, and No. 4 Arizona versus No. 6 Iowa State. These are matchups you just don't see every day.

Since the last edition of my column, the top ten has shifted once again, marked by impressive performances from future NBA stars across the country. So, without further ado, here are college basketball's biggest upsets and top performers from the past week, along with three upcoming matchups to keep an eye on.

Greatest Upsets

Saturday, Feb. 14: No. 16 Texas Tech 78, No. 1 Arizona 75

Once again, just like last week, down goes No. 1.

In a battle of Big 12 heavyweights, top-ranked Arizona dropped its second game in a row at the hands of JT Toppin and the No. 16 Texas Tech Red Raiders in overtime.

Toppin recorded what would be one of the most defining games of his career. He coupled a 31-point performance with 13 rebounds and three assists, drilling the eventual game-winning hook shot with one minute left in overtime to seal the deal for the Red Raiders. His batterymate, Christian Anderson, chipped in with 19 points, six rebounds and eight assists in the contest.

Tuesday, Feb. 17: NC State 82, North Carolina 58

The wheels are starting to fall off the train for UNC after unranked NC State pummeled its injury-ridden rivals by a score of 82–58. This marks Will Wade's second victory over a ranked opponent during his first year as head coach for the Wolfpack.

Former McNeese State star Quadir Copeland gashed the Tar Heels' defense, recording 20 points, six rebounds and seven assists, while freshman Matt Able added an impressive 19 points.

Without star freshman forward Caleb Wilson and center Henri Veesaar, the Tar Heels may be in trouble as the ACC and NCAA tournaments approach.

Tuesday, Feb. 17: Rhode Island 81, No. 18 Saint Louis 76

There's nothing better than a good old-fashioned court storming, especially during mid-major college basketball action, after the unranked Rhode Island Rams snapped No. 18 Saint Louis' 18-game win streak.

While having a hard time shutting down fan favorite Saint Louis center Robbie Avila, who scored 21 points, the Rams pieced together timely offense with crucial free throws down the stretch to stun their A-10 rivals.

Junior guard Jonah Hinton played a stellar game, possibly the best of his career. He accounted for 29 of the Rams' 81 points, including a season-high nine three-pointers, in the win. Keep an eye on the Rams as they approach the A-10 conference tournament.

Top Performers

Bennett Stirtz, Guard (Iowa) dropped 25 points, two rebounds and two assists in the Hawkeyes' 87–82 upset of conference rival and ninth-ranked Nebraska.

Bruce Thornton, Guard (Ohio State) recorded a 27 point, 14 rebound and 10 assist triple-double in the Buckeyes' 86–69 trouncing of No. 24 Wisconsin.

Solo Ball, Guard (UConn) led the No. 5 Huskies to a 79–75 victory over unranked Georgetown, scoring 20 points, six rebounds and four assists.

Nate Heise, Guard (Iowa State) drilled the go-ahead, game-winning three-pointer to lift No. 6 Iowa State over No. 2 Houston.

Games to Watch

Saturday, Feb. 21: No. 4 Arizona (23–2) at No. 2 Houston (23–3)

The Big 12 has been electric this season, and that energy will carry into Saturday night's battle between Houston and Arizona. Both teams have dominated the conference thus far and are poised to make deep runs in the NCAA Tournament this March.

Players to watch include Arizona freshman guard Brayden Burries, who is averaging 15.7 points, 4.7 rebounds and 2.6 assists per game, and Houston freshman guard who is putting up 16.6 points, 3.7 rebounds and 5.3 assists. Both are strong candidates for conference Freshman of the Year.

Saturday, Feb. 21: No. 1 Michigan (25–1) at No. 4 Duke (24–2)

Many earmarked this matchup at the start of the season as the best regular season game of the year. Both teams are undefeated in their respective conferences. Both are loaded with NBA-level talent. Both are led by high-caliber coaches. And last but not least, the game will be played at the famous Capital One Arena in Washington, D.C., providing the perfect neutral site for such a highly anticipated out-of-conference clash.

Monday, Feb. 23: No. 2 Houston (23–3) at No. 8 Kansas (19–6)

Boy, Houston never gets a break.

Following their top five dual with Arizona, the Cougars will travel to the hallowed grounds of Lawrence, Kansas for a dance with the red-hot No. 8 Kansas Jayhawks.

The Jayhawks are riding the momentum from their upset of No. 1 Arizona two weeks ago and look to carry that into this matchup against the Cougars. Forward Flory Bidunga is having a stellar season for Kansas and will undeniably have a huge impact on the course of this game.



UConn Men's Basketball plays Creighton University at Gampel Pavilion in Storrs, Conn. On Feb 18, 2026. The crowd hyped up the team throughout the entire game.
PHOTOS BY SYDNEY CHANDLER, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER