Sports

Photo of the Day | Men's Ice Hockey



The UConn women's hockey team took on Northeastern University on Jan. 24, 2026, at the Toscano Family Ice Forum. Northeastern scored in the final period, leading to the game ending with a UConn loss of 0-1.

PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

SPORTS SPECTRUM:

THE NOT-SO GOLDEN STATE OF THE WARRIORS

by Seth Wallen
CAMPUS CORRESPONDENT
HE/HIM/HIS
savannah.wallen@uconn.edu

The Golden State Warriors used to strike fear into opponents. Those days are far behind them and NBA fans have known this for a while. Year after year, the Warriors were dominant, breaking regular-season records, winning championships and, except for the 3-1 blown lead, they were considered the most outstanding example of a homegrown dynasty. Especially with its three main pieces, Steph Curry, Klay Thompson and Draymond Green being drafted and developed by the Warriors.

Curry is the center of the Warriors' success. He turns 38 in March, with a longevity no one expected a player of his archetype to have. In his 12 All-NBA seasons, six of them have been done while he was the only all-star-caliber player on the roster, all after 2019. The team depends on him, as evidenced by his on/off numbers. Their offensive rating with Curry is 119.7, which ties them fourth overall in the league with OKC as a team. With him off the court, their offensive rating is 111.9, placing them between the Grizzlies and the Brooklyn Nets, both teams that have lost over 25 games.

At one point in December, they were ranked 20th in offense, with a lower offensive rating, while posting a 13-14 record in a Western Conference known for heavyweights. Although they've evened out somewhat now, it's not a great situation to be in, and no one expected Curry to still be performing at this high-octane level, with the 2022 championship being an outlier. In their loss against the Mavericks, Curry dropped 38 points with eight 3-pointers made, with three other Warriors players—De'Anthony Melton, Moses Moody and Jonathan Kuminga—in double figures as far as points go.

With Thompson leaving to join the Mavericks, Green, the other wing of the big three, has been on a steady downhill slide, typical of age. While his defensive impact cannot be denied, he was not making up for it on offense. There was a stretch in December where he had more personal fouls (80) and turnovers (75) than field goals (72). Against the Mavericks, he ended up accumulating four points with six fouls.

The move they made at the trade deadline to extend a shrinking contention window was acquiring Jimmy Butler from the Heat, who was averaging 20 points, five rebounds and four assists while, for the most part, scoring under the average. The Warriors gave him a $121 million, two-year extension and a common sentiment was that he was not performing up to that $54 million-a-year standard. Unfortunately, in the game against the Toronto Raptors, he tore his ACL and is out for the rest of the season, further complicating their situation.

The other offseason acquisition that the Warriors focused on was Al Horford, who is 39. He played 26 minutes against the Mavericks and gave them three points, a shaky offense at best. Averaging seven points, five rebounds and two assists, he's the only offseason acquisition who wasn't traded for, on a two-way contract via the G League, or signed a league minimum.

A strategy solidified between 2020 and 2021 was the Warriors' front office's two timelines, focusing on young talent while also pushing to contend. As the strategy faced intense criticism, owner Joe Lacob began to distance himself from the term in 2023, claiming there's only one timeline focused on winning every year, but that, given how the young talent had processed it, it's now a sour note more than ever.

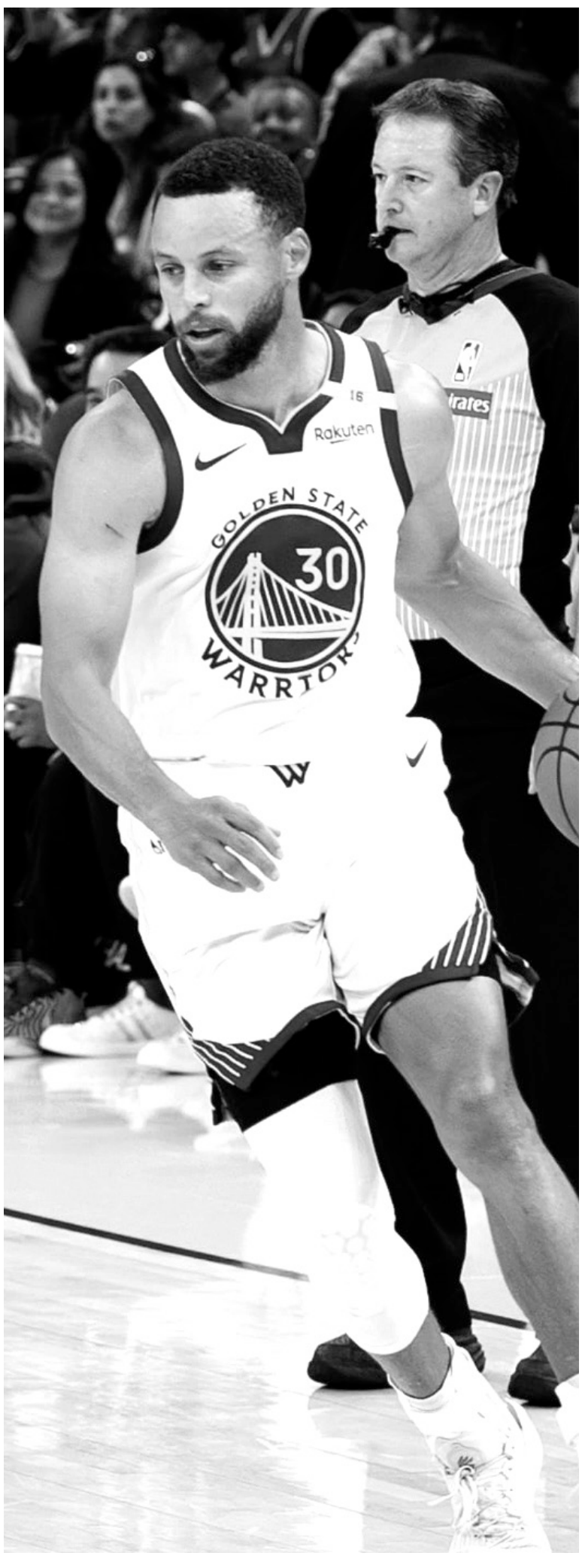
Jonathan Kuminga is probably the clearest example of this. After his role on the team was diminished by the addition of Jimmy Butler, he officially requested a trade on Jan. 15 due to a strained relationship with head coach Steve Kerr, four days before Butler tore his ACL. The disgruntlement dates back to before this season, when Kuminga locked the front office in a stalemate over restricted free agency and then, not playing for more than a month (from Dec 18 to Jan 20), effectively nerfing his trade value.

Brandin Podziemski has had his struggles as a starting shooting guard, often failing to reach 15 points, reminiscent of Jalen Green's time with the Rockets, falling into the same inefficient volume trap. Inconsistent shooting splits (going 0-for-4 from three in the Dallas game) despite his career high scoring (12.2 points per game), most of his problems are more physical observation than what a stat sheet can tell you, other than inefficiency. Catching an open look, predictable pump fakes, driving into a crowded paint and then looking around for someone to pass to after the defense doesn't take the bait. At 6-foot-4 and without much athleticism, he has trouble finishing over people, making his NBA game look like a bag of empty tricks. In addition, he often plays over 20 minutes a night while the inefficiencies persist, logging 33 minutes in the loss to the Mavericks.

James Wiseman, the second overall pick in 2020, is effectively out of the league yet still buoyant in a sense. After being waived by the Pacers in October 2024, he's been on 10-day contracts and was most recently waived again by the Brooklyn Nets in late December. Alongside this, Kuminga and Podziemski's shortcomings and the Warriors' inability to trade any of these assets for Lauri Markkanen, who is averaging 28 points in Utah, make the situation in the immediate future much bleaker.

Take all of this, combined with the PR nightmares surrounding Green, including punching Jordan Poole (who used to be considered a part of their young core) and ruining their chemistry (words from Steve Kerr's mouth), Kevin Durant leaving the team in free agency because of green (also from his mouth), former GM Bob Meyers leaving ion 2023 and the steady inaction surrounding free agency and the franchise, you've painted a picture that has the Warriors starting irrelevance in the face once Curry decides to retire.

There have been conversations about the end of the Warriors' dynasty. Still, at the earliest, it ended when Klay tore his ACL and Achilles' tendon and at the latest, it ended definitively when Green punched Poole and the front office dealt with that situation. As far as the upcoming trade deadline, Michael Porter Jr. has come up as a name that would help the Warriors, but it all depends on whether they're willing to trade any of the young talent that hasn't panned out to a rebuilding Brooklyn team.



Stephen Curry from the Golden State Warriors dribbles the ball during a game. Curry has been with the Golden State Warriors since 2009.

PHOTO COURTESY OF STACIA SLOSS ON FACEBOOK