Sports

Photo of the Day | Men's basketball



The UConn men's basketball team faces off against Wagner University on Nov. 9, 2026 at M&T Bank Center at Gampel Pavilion. The Huskies ended the first half with a 44-18 advantage. PHOTO BY NORA MARIANO, ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR/THE DAILY CAMPUS

THE FANTASY FORECAST:
THE FINAL STRETCH BEFORE THE BREAK

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There are several commonalities between NFL players and college students. From the anticipation of the weekend to the dread of having to review mistakes (either in the film room or on LockDown Browser), the similarities are plentiful. Nonetheless, the most exciting commonality is that of the bye week.

For football stars, the week off is a chance to relax from intense practices and avoid the stress of game day. College students, on the other hand, get a break from academic rigor and can finally sleep until the afternoon.

While most teams have had their week off for the season, Storrs residents are just a week away from theirs. However, for fantasy football managers, time off is never a luxury.

Thankfully, that's where this week's Fantasy Forecast comes into play. Compiled below are some of this week's most interesting matchups so you can enjoy the countdown to the much-needed break.

Pittsburgh Steelers vs. Cincinnati Bengals

It could be argued that the most competitive division in the NFL is the AFC North. Through the first eight weeks of the season, every team held a record of .500 or better. As we enter Week 10, all four are still in playoff contention, yet two are starting to pull away from the pack. The Cincinnati Bengals and Pittsburgh Steelers will answer the question of who is really in front this Sunday night.

Both enter the contest at 6-2 with aspirations of notching five consecutive victories. For the Bengals, their air attack has been unstoppable, with quarterback Joe Burrow primed as an MVP candidate. With wide receivers Ja'Marr Chase and Tee Higgins at his disposal, Cincy's offense has delivered an average of over 35 points in its last four contests.

For Pittsburgh, its success has come at the hands of its defense. In their last four matchups, Steelers opponents have eked out fewer than 15 points per game on average. Under the new direction of defensive coordinator Patrick Graham, the Steelers sit third in rushing defense, allowing an average of only 83.9 yards per game.

For fantasy managers, the concern is not whether Burrow can continue his offensive surge. The last time these two rivals met, he threw three touchdown passes for 282 passing yards. The sore spot will be Cincy's ground attack, as running back Chase Brown will face serious opposition.

However, the same concerns cannot be said for Pittsburgh's rushing attack, as quarterback Aaron Rodgers will most likely continue to rely on running back Jaylen Warren. The backfield veteran leads the league in average yards per carry and will be looking for his third-straight game with 100-plus rushing yards.

The last time these two teams met was Week 3, with just a field goal separating the scores. As the Steelers aim for a 2-0 record in the divisional series, the Bengals are looking to dethrone them and take the top spot in the AFC North. Kickoff is slated for 8:20 p.m.

New England Patriots vs. Detroit Lions

For most New Englanders, this past Sunday gave them flashbacks to something truly harrowing: early-season quarterback Drake Maye. In their devastating loss to the Green Bay Packers, Maye threw three interceptions with a weak 55% completion percentage. His three touchdown passes weren't enough to match Green Bay's unwavering offense.

The debate over whether the New England Patriots are a playoff team will perhaps be settled this week as they take on the Detroit Lions in Munich, Germany. Looking for their fifth straight win, the Lions are eager to climb ahead in the NFC North. At the front of this charge is quarterback Jared Goff. His relatively clean play has increasingly relied on running back Jahmyr Gibbs, who leads the league in carries.

While their win column has continued to increase, the Lions' offense is starting to turn meager. In their first five games, the Lions delivered an average of nearly 36 points per contest. Yet in their last three matchups, they haven't even scored above 20. Due to quick pocket collapses and a less-than-fully-healthy wide receiver in Amon-Ra St. Brown, Detroit has hit a rough patch.

Two struggling offenses and evenly matched defenses mean the international showdown will be competitive but perhaps low-scoring. Fantasy managers should be aware of the difficulties each team may face and look for defenses on the waiver wire. Kickoff is set for 9:30 a.m. EST.

San Francisco 49ers vs. Dallas Cowboys

Perhaps the most fantasy potential for Week 10 can be found in the Sunday afternoon contest between the San Francisco 49ers and the Dallas Cowboys. Each offense has the capacity to deliver, with the former scoring an average of nearly 30 points per game and the latter about 27. What separates the two NFC rivals is their defense, with Dallas opening the possibility for another San Francisco gold rush.

The Cowboys have allowed opponents to rack up approximately 373 yards per game, with their rushing defense surrendering around 147. This means 49ers running back Christian McCaffrey will be at the forefront of San Fran's offense, with fantasy managers expecting a fourth straight 20-point performance.

As for the 49ers, they boast one of the league's strongest rushing defense, allowing fewer than 81 yards per game. In turn, Dallas quarterback Dak Prescott will have to utilize somebody other than running back Javonte Williams — most likely wide receiver CeeDee Lamb.

The 4-5 Cowboys need a turnaround if they want to avoid a third-straight absence from the playoffs. As for San Francisco, they'll look to continue being one of the league's best, with eight wins on the horizon. Desperation versus triumph should lead to fantasy thrill. Kickoff is set for 4:25 p.m.

Best of luck, Huskies.

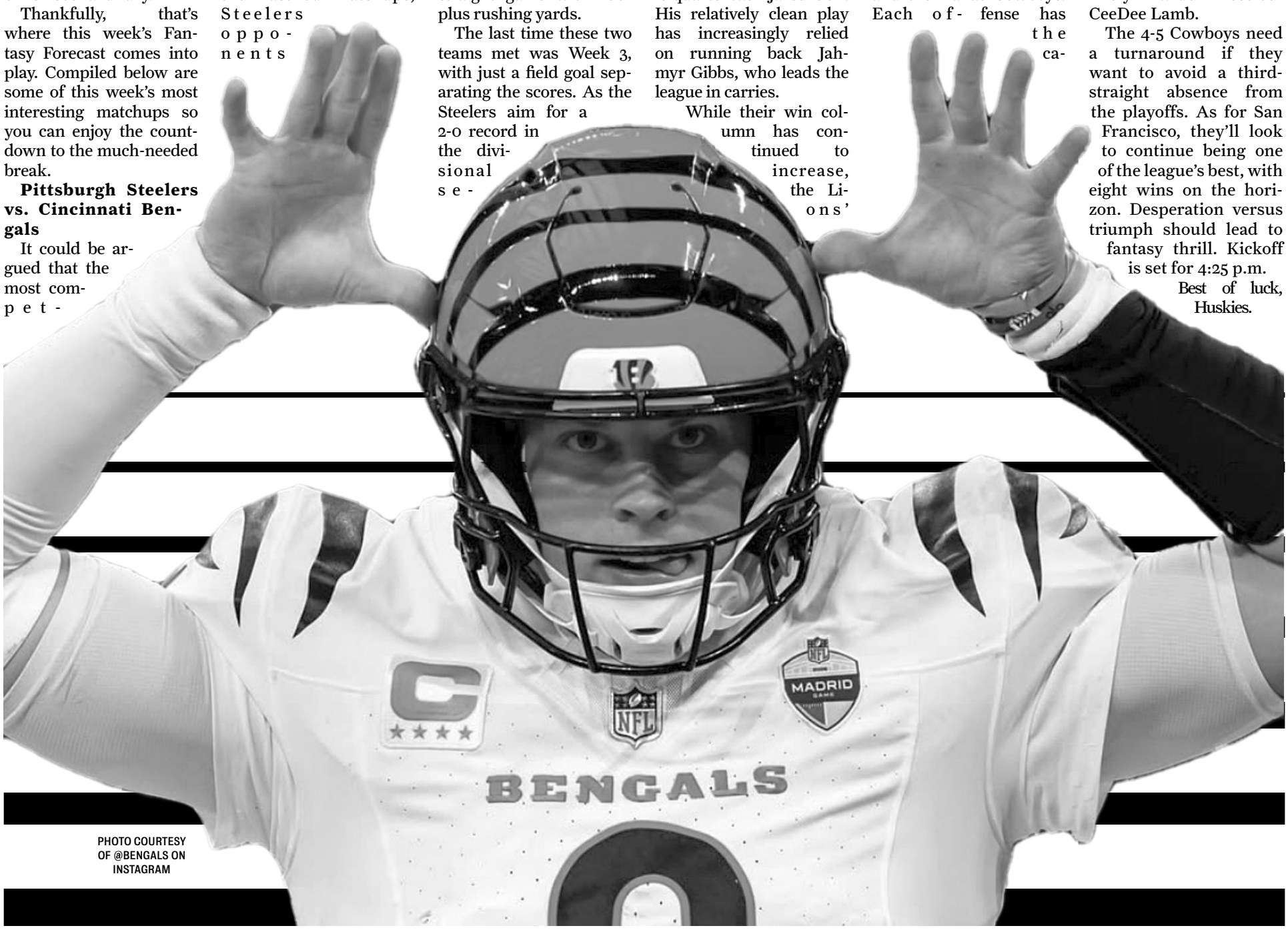


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