Swim & Dive:

UCONN LOOKS TO EXTEND PERFECT RECORD IN THE IOWA INVITATIONAL



The University of Connecticut Huskies host the University of Rhode Island Rams at the Wolff-Zackin Natatorium on Oct. 31, 2026 . The Huskies took home a 159-127 victory against their New England opponents.
PHOTO BY ALEXANDER RENZULLI, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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This week, UConn Swim and Dive will look to extend its winning streak as they compete against 11 other schools in the Iowa Invitational.

The Iowa Invitational will take place from Nov. 17-20 at the University of Iowa's Campus Recreation and Wellness Center. Iowa is set to host Colorado State, Fresno State, Illinois, Illinois State, Indiana State, Iowa State, Miami, Nebraska, Rutgers (diving only), University of Northern Iowa and UConn.

This invitational is something Iowa has been hosting for over a decade. However, it will only be the second year the Huskies compete in it, as last season was their first appearance.

Out of all the teams participating, Nebraska will be the biggest competitor for the Huskies, as they also have a record of 4-0. Nebraska has racked up large margins of victory against almost every team they've faced this season, including a dominant 231-67 win over South Dakota State. With that being said, they haven't faced a competitor as strong as UConn has in Villanova, so it will be a competitive matchup for fans to watch. Aside from the Huskers, Indiana State, Miami and UNI also have very good records, each team with only one loss, making for more competition for the Huskies.

Even with these tough competitors, the Huskies have been on fire, winning their back-to-back meets last weekend against Boston College and Northeastern. The Huskies crushed the Eagles, winning 12 of the 16 events, with senior Bella Hoffman placing first in both her events and getting a season-best time of 1:51.11 in the 200-yard free. Freshman Cara McDonald was also a catalyst for the Huskies, getting first place in both her individual events and getting season-best times in both! This win against Boston College continues the Huskies' historically perfect winning record against the Eagles.

The next day, when the Huskies battled Northeastern, it was another strong performance by UConn. Senior diver Kate Cooper was the top performer of the day, getting first place in both diving events. McDonald also continued her momentum and had a first place finish that day. If Hoffman, McDonald and Cooper can perform that well again, as well as previous high scorer freshman Kate Van Ryn, they will put up a strong front at the Invitational.

The Invitational will start Tuesday at 3 p.m. with Prelims starting at 10 a.m. on Wednesday through Friday. The Finals start at 5 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday and 4 p.m. on Friday. The meet will be streamed on the Iowa Swim and Dive YouTube channel, and fans can also follow along on MeetMobile.

The Weekly Chowdah:

RED SOX SIGN NLCS MVP JAKE BAUERS

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The Boston Red Sox, for the first time in a while, have made waves in the offseason. On Nov. 13, Jeff Passan announced that Boston was signing free agent first baseman Jake Bauers to a four-year, $58 million deal.

Bauers is coming off a career year with the Milwaukee Brewers, recording 127 hits, 93 runs, 26 home runs, 86 RBIs, an OBP .389 and an OPS of .873. His baseball savant page lights up in bright red, a qualitative measure that easily demonstrates just how good his batting was in 2026.

Though Bauers had a great year, it wouldn't be so memorable if not for his performance in the NLCS against a Los Angeles Dodgers team looking to complete the three-peat of World Series titles.

In Games Two, Three and Four, Bauers had some exceptionally timely contributions that allowed Milwaukee to advance past Los Angeles in a four-game sweep.

In Games Two and Three, Bauers led star pitchers Yoshinobu Yamamato and Blake Snell on lengthy at-bats that wore both pitchers out, leading to runs for Milwaukee. In Game Four, he recorded two RBIs and a bases-loaded walk that allowed Milwaukee to overcome an early four-run deficit and complete the sweep.

Bauers's stellar NLCS performance ultimately made him the clear winner of the NLCS MVP designation, an impressive accolade given Milwaukee's stacked roster.

The consistent high-level play in the 2026 regular season and stepping up when the lights were brightest in the playoffs clearly made Bauers a must-sign for Boston's front office. However, it is still somewhat of a gamble to make.

Before this past season, Bauers was mostly seen as a "journeyman" type of player. Since joining the majors in 2018, he could reliably be found somewhere within a team's rotation but was never expected to make major contributions to the team's success.

Bauers's 2026 season is thus a major outlier when considering his overall career. It remains to be seen if he actually improved his play or if the situation around him in Milwaukee was perfect for highlighting his abilities. Boston certainly has hope that it's the former.

To be completely fair to president of baseball operations Craig Breslow and his team, the signing doesn't carry too much risk. With the contract having an AAV of only $14.5 million, it would not be too difficult to move on from Bauers if things don't work out.

If Bauers does continue producing his 2026 results moving forward, then the contract will look like a steal. Willson Contreras, who plays the same position as Bauers at Boston, made roughly $17 million in 2026, despite producing comparable stats to Bauers.

The signing will undoubtedly have major downstream effects on Boston's roster. Adding another player who can become a potential designated hitter, first baseman and/or outfielder will further Boston's logjam at these positions and others.

Certain long-time Red Sox will most likely be traded or released within this offseason or before the 2027 trade deadline barring a season ending lockout.

Fan favorite designated hitter Masataka Yoshida's future with the team seems less concrete now. Given that his only real position on the team is DH, it's hard to see how he'll fit into a rotation with Bauers joining the team.

Outfielders Triston Casas and Jarren Duran may also be on the chopping block. Casas may be more likely than Duran given his extensive injury history since joining the majors, having only played one full (but promising) season in 2023.

Duran, on the other hand, has been implicated in trade rumors for two years now but has not been moved. The Bauers signing may finally be the catalyst for such a trade.

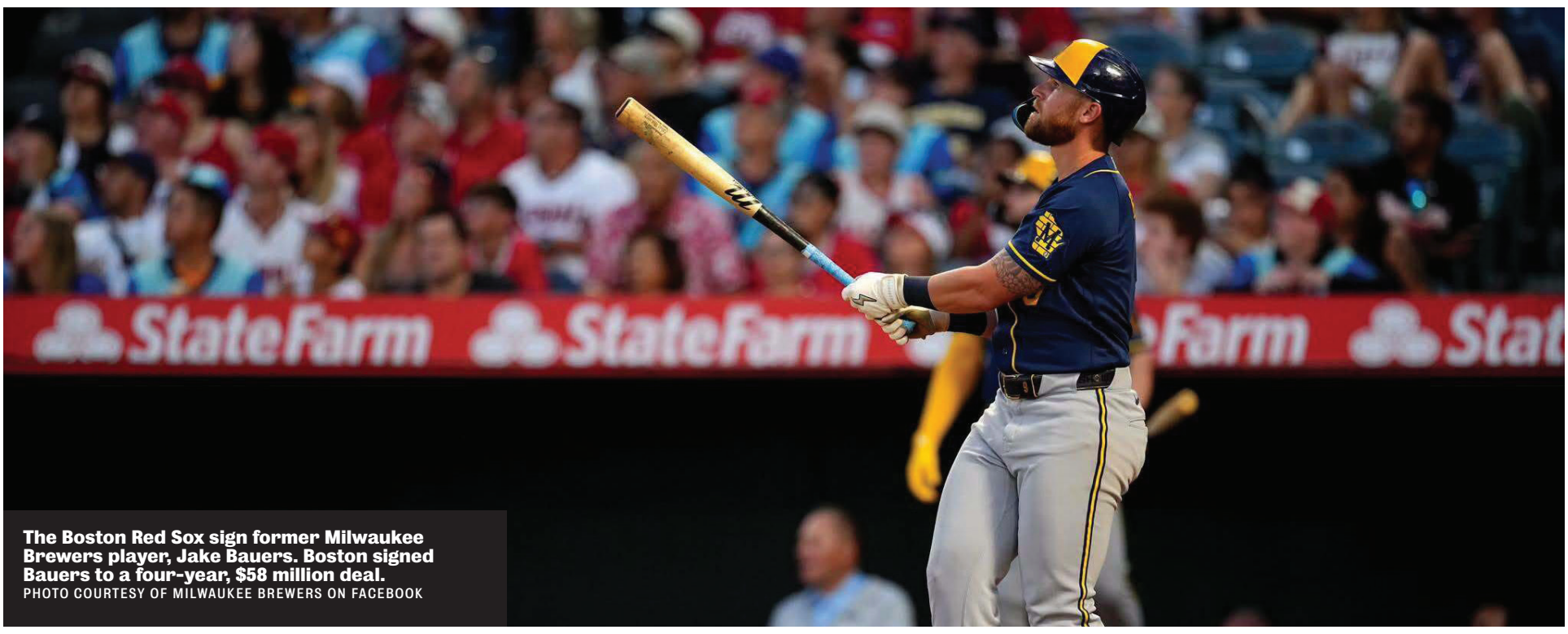
Aging shortstop Trevor Story is entering the final years of his six-year contract. Many fans understandably want to see the team part ways with him given his suboptimal performances in the past few years.

With star prospect and shortstop Franklin Arias potentially moving up from Triple A Worcester, there may be some value in keeping a veteran around to aid Arias's growth in the major leagues. We'll have to wait and see just how valuable Boston views such leadership.

Finally, Contreras, despite playing roughly the same exact positions as Bauers, will benefit the most from his signing. It will enable Contreras to get well-needed rest and help at the position. For a player that was dealing with injuries to close out the 2026 regular season, having Bauers share responsibilities will certainly limit the likelihood of that happening in the future.

Though there is some risk attached, the Bauers signing should bode well for Boston. It allows them to strengthen certain positions and rearrange others. If it doesn't work out, then it shouldn't be difficult to move on given the contract structure.

Hopefully Red Sox fans will see a dominant outing from Bauers next season. Red Sox fans will just have to maintain faith that Boston's staff can help him replicate his success, and that any team actually gets to play baseball at all.



The Boston Red Sox sign former Milwaukee Brewers player, Jake Bauers. Boston signed Bauers to a four-year, $58 million deal.
PHOTO COURTESY OF MILWAUKEE BREWERS ON FACEBOOK