

Men's Basketball:

FIVE-STAR NAVORRO BOWMAN JR. COMMITS TO UCONN



Five-star guard NaVorro Bowman Jr. on his official visit to UConn last weekend. Bowman officially committed to the UConn men's basketball team on Sep. 10.

by Thaddeus Sawyer
STAFF WRITER
HE/HIM/HIS
thaddeus.sawyer@uconn.edu

The UConn men's basketball team landed its first high school recruit of the 2027 class on Thursday.

Consensus five-star point guard NaVorro Bowman Jr. has committed to UConn, according to Adam Schefter of ESPN.

Bowman becomes the highest-ranked player from the 2027 class to commit thus far, also becoming the highest nationally ranked recruit to commit to UConn since Liam McNeeley in the class of 2024. Both 247 Sports and Rivals have Bowman ranked 11th nationally, while ESPN has him slotted in at 12th.

A rising senior at Notre Dame High School in Sherman Oaks, Calif., Bowman averaged 20.5 points, 3.8 rebounds, 3.6 assists and 1.6 steals on the Nike EYBL Circuit this past summer.

Bowman also won gold with the USA Basketball 2026 Men's U17 National Team at the 2026 FIBA U17 Men's World Cup, averaging 11.9 points and 3.6 assists across seven games and one start.

The son of former NFL All-Pro linebacker NaVorro Bowman, the 6-foot-3 Bowman Jr. is smaller but of similar height to recent UConn success stories at point guard, such as two-time national champion Tristen Newton (6-foot-5) or the incumbent Silas

Demary Jr. (6-foot-4). 247 Sports Scouting Director Adam Finkelstein described Bowman as one of the best two-way guards in the 2027 class while comparing his tenacity to that of a football player.

"He brings a similar grit to [the linebacker] as well and is excellent laterally," Finkelstein wrote in a scouting report published in July. "He's aggressive, physical, able to absorb contact and willing to sit down and guard."

Bowman visited Storrs over the weekend before cancelling scheduled visits with Illinois, Texas and Arizona, according to 247 Sports. The Illinois visit was scheduled for Thursday, according to 247 Sports.

Bowman stands as a potential replacement for Demary should the All-Big East first-teamer and defender decide to make the jump to the NBA following this season, a choice the 22-year-old mulled over following last season before opting to return for another year. Bowman would be in line to compete with freshman guard Junior County, who is likely to serve as Demary's backup in 2026-27.

Depth guard and first-year Husky Jaye Nash will also have eligibility remaining following this season; both Nash and Demary gained an extra year of eligibility for 2027-28 following the adoption of NCAA's new age-based eligibility model this summer.

Sports Spectrum:

THE NBA FINDS THE CLIPPERS GUILTY OF CAP CIRCUMVENTION



Los Angeles Clippers owner Steve Ballmer. He was suspended for a year after the NBA found the Clippers guilty of cap circumvention. PHOTO COURTESY OF IMAGN IMAGES

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

A year after independent journalist Pablo Torre uncovered allegations of salary cap circumvention, the reality has proven to be as damaging as anticipated, evolving into one of the most punitive scandals in NBA history.

The 1999 Minnesota Timberwolves case involving Joe Smith long set the benchmark for cap circumvention in the league. That secret agreement resulted in the forfeiture of four first-round picks and a massive fine. However, prior warnings carry greater severity for the Los Angeles Clippers' situation. Following a 2015 fine for an unauthorized endorsement arrangement, owner Steve Ballmer publicly pledged strict adherence to the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Unallowable benefits requested during Kawhi Leonard's 2019 free agency prompted further concerns and

league-wide compliance enforcement.

An independent investigation by Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz established systemic violations. The findings revealed that the Clippers facilitated off-court sponsor deals for Leonard, leveraged team business to incentivize participating companies and failed to disclose improper financial demands. Top executive Gillian Zucker initiated contacts in violation of league rules, while President of Basketball Operations Lawrence Frank tracked the arrangements and approved unauthorized expenses. Rather than cooperating, franchise leadership obstructed the inquiry through delayed documentation and false statements.

Thus, the NBA handed down a \$30 million organizational fine, one-year suspensions for Ballmer and Zucker, a six-month suspension for Frank, a five-year ban for Leonard's manager, strict league compliance oversight for the franchise

and the forfeiture of five consecutive first-round draft picks.

What this essentially means is that Ballmer cannot walk into his own arena under the pretext of NBA official events and cannot go to owner's meetings. For the next five years, the NBA is going to verify trades are made without any intended cap circumvention.

With the loss of five consecutive draft picks, the Clippers add on to the amount of the future they have forfeited, willingly or unwillingly. Between complicated draft rights, swaps and draft selections being voided out of existence, the Clippers lose a lot of leverage in future deals. The recent NBA champions, the New York Knicks, built their roster on trades as opposed to free agency, infamously leveraging their future for their now — and it paid off

for them. Until 2034, the Clippers do not outright own or control any of their own picks—meaning they cannot pivot.

The premise behind assembling the team in 2019 was to pair Leonard with Paul George to win an NBA championship. Many pundits argued that the Clippers had a great chance to do so. The Clippers only managed to win three postseason series, not counting the play-in.

Leonard was not healthy enough to compete in several of the postseason runs. The only ones he did participate in resulted in devastating losses for the team. The Clippers blew a 3-1 lead in the 2020 bubble at the hands of the Denver Nuggets. In this year's play-in, 36-year-old Draymond Green defended Leonard, offensively limiting him as a 37-year-old Stephen Curry outplayed him despite Leonard's All-NBA play towards the

back half of the NBA season.

Otherwise, all they managed to get was a Western Conference finals appearance without Leonard. George walked away for nothing; the Clippers traded James Harden for Darius Garland, and Leonard was traded for Brandon Ingram and Grady Dick.

When evaluating the worst trades in NBA history, you can argue the team has been able to bounce back from the damage somewhat. When evaluating failed superteams, you can make an argument that they recovered.

For the Clippers, though, a decade of draft assets — gone. Half a billion dollars, combined from the luxury tax that Balmer had to pay, alongside the money paid for legal counsel, the fraudulent companies and the NBA fine.

Though the Clippers announced that they were going to fight the ruling using every legal channel available to them, the NBA declared its ruling to be final.

This scandal effectively ends the Clippers' current era before it could truly begin. By tying their fate to a prohibited gamble, the organization has ensured that its path forward is not defined by championships but by the absence of them, solidifying its place in the NBA record books for all the wrong reasons.

Paul George of the LA Clippers handles the ball during the game against the Dallas Mavericks during Round 1 Game 4 of the 2024 NBA Playoffs on April 28, 2024. PHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES.

