



Coming off impressive home wins last week against Illinois-Chicago and Loyola of Chicago, the Cleveland State Vikings hit the road again for the Indiana trip—arguably the toughest road trip of the season.

The Vikings (14-3, 4-1 Horizon League) face its rival Butler (9-8, 3-2 HL) tonight in a national televised game on ESPNU (7 p.m.) and Valparaiso (10-7, 3-2 HL) Sunday (2:35 p.m.).

"No one over the last five or six years have won both of those games," said CSU head coach Gary Waters. "If you can (sweep this road trip) it changes the dynamics of the league."

UW-Milwaukee, who leads the Horizon at 5-1, split the Indiana trip—losing to Butler and defeating Valpo. The Panthers are a half-game ahead of CSU and Youngstown State, who are both 4-1 in the conference.

CSU has been one of the best road teams this season as they are 7-1 in road games. The seven road wins are tied for most in the nation.

"I don't think these kids fear the road," said Waters. "They just go out and play."

The Vikings will try to end the stigma that they can't beat Butler.

Since CSU upset Butler in the 2009 Horizon championship game, the Bulldogs have won five

straight against the Vikings and nine of the past 10 meetings.

CSU hasn't played well at Butler's Hinkle Fieldhouse either, where they are 2-19 all-time.

Last year, the Bulldogs handed CSU an embarrassing 23-point loss at Hinkle in front of a national TV audience.

"We weren't prepared to handle what they threw at us," said Waters. "They came right at us and it was over quickly."

Waters said last year's loss has helped them prepare for tonight's game.

"We're going in there with all guns a-blazing," said Waters. "We can't go there not ready to play. We've got to take control."

Waters said this isn't the same Butler team that they have faced the past couple of years.

"They're not the same shooters," said Waters. "They're ninth in the league in free-throw shooting (60.8 percent) and eighth in field goal percentage (40.4 percent)."

So what does CSU need to do to beat Butler?

"We've got to do what we do," said Waters. "And you've got to hit some shots."

*Photo courtesy of Butlersports.com*