

Lead Pipe LOCKS

Written by {ga=leadpipe}

Wednesday, November 21 2007 7:00 PM -

We here at The Cleveland Fan have a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving. Continued growth, great play from the teams we cover, a great group of contributors who are also all great guys ... and the privilege of being affiliated with the nation's hottest handicapper, Mike "Lead" Piper. What he has done in six weeks here has been nothing sort of amazing. Lead has just one losing weekend all season, and it was a 2-3 week. And he's gone 4-1 each of the last two weeks. Lead has another five plays for us today. One Friday game and four for Saturday.



"Well done is better than well said."

-Ben Franklin.

If you've been reading and enjoying Lead Pipe's columns, this is probably debatable.

However, in the end Ben Franklin is correct. Lead talking about how he is going to crush the book is fun, but standing at the window and reaping the benefits of a fabulously handicapped week is better.

And players, if you've been sweating the Lead Man this year, go ahead and place the preceding paragraph in the "tell me something I don't know," file.

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Lead followers are well aware that last week was his second consecutive 4-1 Saturday. They know it was his fourth straight winning week. They know that since dropping anchor at <http://www.theclevelandfan.com/> he has amassed 5 winning weeks in 6 efforts, which has improved his season record to 10-1-1.

Simply amazing.

And, if you are a Lead follower, it is you that, week in and week out, is filling your pockets with cash. It is you scrambling to find a new bookie because your old one left town or was forced to quit the business. It is you walking around in designer suits pricing jet skis and fancy cars. And it is you presiding over a bountiful feast placed on the table in front of your family this Thanksgiving, reciting The Lead's Prayer;

Dear Lead,

Thank you for this feast we are about to receive.

Thank you for your guidance through this tough, but winning, football season, and may you continue to guide us through the post season.

Thank you for eliminating the evils of poor value parlays, teasers and misinformation.

Through the courtesy and wisdom of The Lead Man, all things are possible.

Please keep yourself safe so that we may all be together to wager games next season.

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Amen.

If you are not aboard, there is still time. Unlike the cramped and rickety Mayflower, The Lead Boat still has plenty of room for more passengers. Or, to be more precise, there's still room for winners. As we sail through the last full week of college football and into the post season, there are sure to be choppy waters ahead. But nobody navigates the vast and dangerous ocean that is sports handicapping better than Captain Lead. While all the other cappers are forced to have all hands patching holes in their vessels as a result of several cold weeks of striking icebergs, Lead and his crew enjoy their time up on the Lido Deck, relaxed, flushed with cash and in the company of wine, women and song. Where, to no Lead fan's surprise - it is always HOT.

Climb aboard - Lead's expecting you.

A quick note players. There is perhaps no better vehicle professor Lead can employ to teach a lesson than an actual game that emphasizes it. Last week's game between TCU and UNLV provides us such an opportunity to learn and to grow.

You will read in many handicapping articles that you should "bet against the general public", followed by a list of reasons why (which we aren't going to get into in this piece). Many of those reasons are valid but the amateur cappers just leave you with only that. While this is a good bit of information there is a problem in the sense that many gamblers take this as gospel and use it as a sole reason to wager a particular game.

This will get you in trouble and there are multiple reasons why.

First, barring a major piece of inside information, (hidden injury to a star player etc.) if you have only one reason to bet a line, you probably shouldn't be betting

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the game. Secondly, it is imperative to find out if indeed the public is on the game or sharp money is on the game - there is a huge difference.

Let's look at last week's TCU/UNLV tilt. At first glance we see the game opened at TCU -13 and moved to -17.5 by game time. The guy who likes to simply wager against the public is all over UNLV. He sees the line move 4.5 points in the opposite direction and loves his "sucker bet". So, that's one vote for UNLV. Now, let's really look at the game. And by really, as you will see, Lead isn't talking about hours of breaking down stats. He's simply going to ask himself a few additional questions rather than blindly going with a lone "handicapping rule".

-Isn't 4.5 point a lot of points?

4.5 points is a hell of a lot of points. It's a lot of points for a Monday Night NFL game or a high profile game with a huge handle. 4.5 points in a TCU/UNLV game that appeals to few people besides family, friends and those who wager on it is a massive number. That's a big red light.

-Isn't UNLV located in Las Vegas?

95% of all sharps are living in the same city as this college, at least during the football season. They ALL know someone directly associated with that football program. Most likely, they talk to them on a daily basis. If you are wagering a game with significant line movement, and one of those teams resides in Las Vegas, that's another red light.

-Is TCU a draw?

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An undefeated Notre Dame team will have a ton of square money behind it. A mediocre TCU team will not. 4.5 points in line movement in favor of an unpopular team? Red light.

-Didn't UNLV's QB get hurt last week?

Yes. Red light.

-Hasn't UNLV thrown in the towel early each of the last three seasons?

Yes. Red light.

This case is clear - Sharp money was moving that line. Lead recalls telling a friend TCU was good at -20, and he was right. (Final score TCU 35 UNLV 10)

If something unusual happens - think. Don't rely on an isolated tip you read in a magazine.

Happy Thanksgiving players! Here are some picks, to enjoy with the turkey;

Let's start with a Friday special. The Chippewas of Central Michigan travel to the Rubber bowl to take on the Zips of Akron. Akron is coming off a tilt in which they scored their nickname and Central Michigan is tuning up for the MAC championship game in early December. The Zips have lost 4 of 5, and have looked poor in doing so. Lead can't see them being able to score with a very capable Central offense that averages 168 on the ground and 261 through the air. In college, when you are close to a bowl full of rubbers, good times usually follow, unfortunately for Akron; the Chippewas are going to be doing most of the scoring.

Central Michigan -2.5

What else can be said about this match-up? The student body camps out for weeks. Tickets scalped at ridiculous prices. Dick Vitale individually tongue kissing anyone from Duke Univ...What? Football? Sorry players, Lead thought he was capping the Maui Invitational for a second. Duke Football? You know the routine by now. Wager against Duke, and collect. Repeat. Duke stinks; North Carolina has been competitive in all but two games and is very competent at home. Tar Heel QB T. J. Yates last week became the North Carolina single season passing leader. Against a defense giving up 440 yds and 34 point a game, these should be reasons enough. How many times must Lead bet against Duke before he gets his point Lacrosse?

North Carolina -14.

Washington State travels to Husky Stadium to take on Washington. State is winless on the road and has had turnover problems all season long. It just so happens Washington has been adept at taking the ball away, especially in the last month. Washington State also has big problems defensively and Washington will put the pressure on as they have recorded 28 sacks this season.

This all adds up to a big match-up problem on the road for the Cougars.

Washington -5.5

Tell Lead if this sounds familiar; a team has their eye on the post season and they are pitted against UNLV, a team that has obviously thrown in the towel on the 2007 campaign. For the third week in a row, this is the case. UNLV, winless on the road travels to Albuquerque to face the Lobos of New Mexico. UNLV has lost 14 straight Mountain West road games and are currently riding a 7 game losing streak. It looks to be the Rebel's fourth consecutive year finishing with exactly two wins. How UNLV head coach Mike Sanford still has his job is one of NCAA

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football's biggest mysteries. UNLV is again playing back-up QB Travis Dixon and too make matters worse, as is the case with teams who quit, UNLV can't protect the guy. The Lobos look to improve their bowl stature with this home win and should win going away.

New Mexico -10.

Lastly, The University of Louisiana Monroe, red hot and fresh off an upset of Alabama travels to Cajun field to take on Louisiana Lafayette. The Warhawks have won 4 of 5 and this is a good match-up for them. Monroe struggles defending the pass, however, the Cajun's do their cookin' on the ground. Also, Lafayette starting QB Michael Desomeaux is doubtful for Saturday, leaving Lead to believe the Cajuns are going to struggle to keep up with an excellent Warhawk offense. Down in the Bayou they like to bring out the Scoville scale to measure the hotness of their peppers. Put the current UL Monroe on that scale right now and they'll rate well above "Sizzling hot" and a notch below "Lead Pipe Hot." That Lead's friends is HOT.

UL Monroe -3.

Have a safe, happy, and profitable holiday weekend players. As always, [feel free to shoot Lead an e-mail](#) to get his thoughts on any other action on the weekend slate.