

This Week in MAC Football

Written by MikeSpinelli

Friday, October 19 2012 8:53 AM - Last Updated Saturday, October 20 2012 5:27 AM



Four conference games are on the docket this week, including Kent State facing their first challenge in our Game of the Week, and Akron also hosting a powerhouse. All games are on Saturday.

Our game of the week has the **Kent State** Golden Flashes hosting **Western Michigan** in their first real test in the MAC. The Broncos have had a tough season after being picked by some to win the West. Key injuries, including starting QB Alex Carder cost them a key game against Toledo, but last week they laid an egg against Ball State in overtime. Allowing the Cards to stay in the top half of the West. Kent State sits at 3-0 in the MAC, beating Buffalo, Ball State, and Eastern Michigan. WMU gets it done in the air, with Carder and Tyler Van Tubbermen combining for 1846 yards passing, Jaime Wilson is their favorite target with 681 yards and 6 TD's. Kent gets it done on the ground, with Dri Archer gaining 10.8 yards per run for 625 yards, and Traiyon Durham gaining 525. Both have 6 TD's. Kent hopes to stay ahead of BGSU in the standings, as they play UMass this week. Plus they can gain bowl eligibility. Western Michigan hopes to get back to .500, both in conference and overall. This looks to be the closest game in the MAC, and I am taking the Flashes at home.

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The **Akron** Zips improve each week but have yet to put up a MAC win. This week they host the team some feel is the best in the MAC this year, the **Northern Illinois** Huskies.

Akron's Dalton Williams is currently third in the nation in passing yards, remarkable in itself but especially when you consider Jawon Chisholm is in the top 20 in the nation in rushing yards.

The problem? The defense is 114

th

in the nation. The Huskies are led (in passing and rushing) by Jordan Lynch. Lynch leads FBS quarterbacks in rushing, and sits at 4

th

overall with 918 yards. That against Akron's front seven, which lacks depth and size, spells trouble for the home team. Akron will get a couple of MAC wins this year, but it won't be this week. This game is on ESPN3 at noon.

In other East Division action, **Bowling Green** heads to **Massachusetts**. This looks like the blow-out of the week, but this is the Minutemen who took Ohio to the brink. But BGSU has a balanced attack, and a strong defense (including the nation's leading sacker Chris Jones), and should dispatch UMass easily.

Out West **Ball State** visits **Central Michigan** in what should be a close game. Ball State has knocked off Indiana, USF, and Western Michigan this year, and sit in third in the West at 2-2. Keith Wenning is also a top 10 passer, and can also run when need be. The Chippewas are still trying to find their way, coming in 0-2 in the MAC, and losing a tough one last week against Navy on national TV. I have Ball State edging CMU to stay in the top three in the West. This game is on ESPN3 at 3:30.

Buffalo hosts Pittsburgh in their long-standing rivalry. Pitt comes in 2-4 (including a loss to Youngstown State) but brings a strong passing game to play against Buffalo's awful defense. Buffalo brings a strong running game, but it won't be enough. This game is on ESPN3 and Big East Network at 3:30.

Toledo hosts 21st ranked Cincinnati Saturday night in an interesting matchup. The Bearcats come in claiming the title of second best team in the state (behind tOSU), while Toledo is thought to be the best in the MAC. Neither team has played a tough schedule thus far; Cincy comes in 5-0 including a big win over Miami Ohio, and 1-0 in the Big East having beaten Pittsburgh in Week One. Toledo comes in 6-1 their one loss coming in Week One in overtime against Arizona. They're 4-0 in the MAC, including a 27-15 win against BGSU. Toledo brings a balanced attack, Cincy being more run oriented with George Winn having 521 yards (6.4 avg) and 4 TD. Munchie Legaux has 1208 yards and 11 TD through the air. With the Bearcat's

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schedule thus far, this is a tough one to call, but I'm going with them in a thriller. This game is on ESPN3 at 7:00.

And then there's **Eastern Michigan** hosting **Army**. The Eagles look for their first win over the 1-5 Black Knights, and this should be another close game. But I don't think they'll do it, the nation's top ranked rushing attack (led by Raymond Maples) will drop EMU to 0-7. This game is on ESPN3 at 1:00.