

Battle on the Blue: Toledo's Game at Boise St. Will be Shown Live on STO

Written by {ga=mikeperry}

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The University of Toledo football team has the well-earned reputation of being a “giant killer.”

They will try to live up to that reputation again Saturday when they travel to Idaho, and SportsTime Ohio will bring it to you live.

STO just added Saturday’s contest between the visiting Rockets and the No. 3 team in the nation, Boise State, Saturday evening at 8 p.m. STO will also televise the Saturday afternoon match-up between rivals Akron and Kent State at Dix Stadium in Kent.

The undefeated Broncos are gunning for a shot in the BCS Championship Game in Tempe, Arizona in January, and the Rockets will look to put an end to those plans with yet another major upset...the kind of upset that has become a staple of the Rockets’ program.

However, the Broncos have been virtually unbeatable on their signature blue turf, currently riding a 57-game home winning streak.

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Also, Boise St. senior quarterback Kellen Moore has been virtually unbeatable as well, rolling up a 30-1 record in his 31 career starts.

How does Toledo head coach Tim Beckman think his Rockets will respond to travelling a long way from home to play a nearly-perfect quarterback on the bizarre blue turf?

"We're so young there's not a lot that really fazes us," Beckman said. "I think they realize we're just going to go out and try to play together as a team. We'll let it all loose."

The Rockets will have to not only let it all loose, they will have to be as disciplined and attentive as they have been all season. Boise State is not only the fourth-ranked team in the nation, they lead the country in total defense (allowing 223.5 yards per game) and are in the top 18 in the country in the following offensive and defensive categories: 18th in rushing with 229.2 yards per game, 12th in passing with 297.7 yards per game, fourth in total offense at 527 yards per game, third in scoring at 45 points per game, fifth in rushing defense at 75.7 yards allowed per game and 15th in scoring defense allowing 15 points per game.

Beckman said his team is fully aware of the challenge the Broncos will present for his Rockets.

"They know what type of a program Boise is and they have aspirations for this program to someday be like Boise," Beckman said. "I think they're excited about it, to have an opportunity to play, at least in my vote, the No. 3 team in the country. And to play Boise there is a great opportunity for our players."

Boise State head coach Chris Petersen, on the other hand, is not quite sure what the Rockets have in store for his squad...something he is not very worried about.

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"We don't have much familiarity with their coaches or their players," Petersen said. "That's good, though. It kind of gives us a breath of fresh air. We have a lot of tape to look at and we just study the heck out of that."

Petersen and his staff have already watched plenty of tape on Toledo, including the Rockets' surprising 31-20 win on the road at Purdue. He was very impressed with Toledo's intensity.

"They were really getting after them, to tell you the truth. It was 17-0 for quite awhile before Purdue rallied," he said. "They play good, clean football. They do a really good job with the turnover margin, and that's always going to give you a chance. As we get this late in the season I think stats really start to bear their heads accurately. So they do a good job with the football and get some takeaways as well."

The Rockets have had an up-and-down season thus far. The highlight was the win over Purdue, the lowlight came last week in a home loss to Idaho. Beckman knew his young Rockets were going to be learning as they went, so the peaks and valleys haven't been unexpected. Even with the two losses this season the Rockets sit on top of the MAC-West with a 2-0 conference record.

"What I'm proud about is their attitude and their commitment to making the Rocket football program better," Beckman said following the Idaho loss last weekend. "Of course I'm never happy about not winning a football game but I am proud about the way they're trying to finish and we're getting better and better at those things. But until we figure out how not to beat ourselves we're not going to be very successful."

Petersen's undefeated Broncos have defeated ranked teams Virginia Tech and Oregon State this season. He is not worried about a letdown against the Rockets because, simply, he thinks his players have respected what they have seen from Toledo this season.

"You put the tape on and you let guys make judgments or opinions for themselves," he said. "You see (Toledo) has some very good players and they play hard and they have a good scheme. You see them beat a Big Ten team...I think all that kind of speaks for itself. I don't think our players will have any trouble getting ready for these guys at all."

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And what does Beckman think of playing on the fabled blue turf?

“Boise definitely uses the blue field to their advantage. I’ve read numerous quotes about the blue on blue, but Boise’s still got a good football team,” he said. “The field is the same length and it’s still the same width as ours is out here in the Glass Bowl. It’s just a different color.”