

Road Dogs, Road Dogs Everywhere

Written by {ga=mikeperry}

Saturday, October 23 2010 6:00 AM - Last Updated Saturday, October 23 2010 7:48 AM



After a “so-so” effort of picking Mid-American Conference winners last week, it is time to give it another shot...mainly to clear my good name and sullied reputation. Last week I won three, lost three and pushed one so, in the end, I would have broken even minus the juice. This will not do.

There are seven games on the MAC schedule this weekend and, surprisingly, there are four home dogs. However, for entertainment purposes only, let me tell you what to expect and see how these games will stack up against the betting lines.

By the way, no one told me to add the “for entertainment only” disclaimer, I just want to cover myself in case someone takes these picks seriously and blows the mortgage money gambling on MAC football. As a wise man (err Bookie) once told me, “What do you expect when you are betting on a bunch of 19 and 20 year-olds? If you want to gamble, Windsor is not that far away.”

Temple -7.5 at Buffalo: Temple crushed the Bulls at home last year, 37-13. This year the Owls are a touch better while the Bulls are about the same, so this seems like a relatively easy pick. However, the Owls are just 1-2 away from Lincoln Financial Stadium this season with its only win coming over a substandard Army team, by just a touchdown.

Buffalo is 1-1 at home this season. They shut out Rhode Island, 31-0 and fell to Central Florida, 24-10. A healthy Bernard Pierce will make the difference. I would be much more comfortable if

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the line was where it started, just seven points. Those half-points can kill you.

The pick – Take Temple and give the points.

Ohio -2.5 at Miami: Last season was one of the worst in RedHawks history, and it included a 28-7 road loss in Peden Stadium. This year it is an entirely different Miami team, one that sits a half-game better than the Bobcats atop the MAC-East standings. This is the kind of game a team like Miami, if it really wants to be a championship contender and earn a trip to the MAC Championship Game, absolutely has to win. If you have your arch-rival at your place, while nipping at your heels in the standings, you have to make a statement. This is the kind of game you dream of and a situation, I think, the RedHawks will be able to handle.

The pick – Take Miami and the points.

Kent -2.5 at Bowling Green: How is Kent favored in this game? Do people not pay attention to MAC football? Kent rarely beats the Falcons...especially at Doyt Perry Stadium. Bowling Green has won eight of its last nine contests against the Golden Flashes, its only loss in this stretch coming in 2006, a 38-3 home defeat. But for the last three seasons the Falcons have taken care of business. If you watched last season's Kent-BG thriller in Kent, a last-second 36-35 Bowling Green win, you would realize that regardless of the situation, the score or the circumstances the Golden Flashes will always find a way to hand the game to Bowling Green.

The pick – Take Bowling Green and the points.

Western Michigan -7.5 at Akron: The Broncos beat the teams they should beat and lose to the teams that are better than them. They should beat Akron, but more than a touchdown is a bit much to ask...especially against an Akron team absolutely starving for a win. This is one of those gut picks.

The pick- Take Akron and the points.

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Central Michigan +10 at Northern Illinois: Central Michigan has to be one of the most disappointing teams in college football this season. A perfect 8-0 in the MAC last season, winners of the MAC Championship Game against Ohio and a bowl winner over Troy, the Chippewas were everyone's pick to win the MAC West again as well as the championship game.

But CMU is mired in a four-game losing streak and is tied with Eastern Michigan in the MAC West basement. Northern Illinois, on the other hand, has won four games in a row and is a perfect 3-0 in the conference. The CMU-Temple game in Week 2 was supposed to be a probable MAC Championship Game preview...you can probably throw that out the window. Look for Chad Spann, Chandler Harnish and the rest of the Huskies to run all over the Chippewas.

The Pick – Take Northern Illinois to cover the 10 points.

Eastern Michigan +24 at Virginia: Hey, at least the Eagles got a win last week.

The pick – Take Virginia to cover the 24.

Ball State +11.5 at Toledo: A lot depends on which Ball State team shows up. Will it be the road warriors that blew out Central Michigan on the road or will it be the lackluster team that suffered back-to-back home losses to Western Michigan and Central Michigan? Toledo's three losses came to tough teams out of conference. Ball State is too inconsistent, Toledo is too good.

The pick – Take Toledo to cover the 11.5 points.