



# NCAA BASKETBALL

FROM ONE OF THE NATIONS TOP SPORTS HANDICAPPER

**Sunday, March 19, 2023**

## **ROUND #2**

### **CREIGHTON vs. BAYLOR**

**Game Time: 7:10 PM EST**

**Broadcast: TBS**

**Game Pick: CREIGHTON PICK-EM**

#### **GAME ANALYSIS**

Simply stated, I don't feel this is a good match-up for Baylor. Creighton's big man Kalkbrenner is a matchup nightmare for the Baylor Bears. The 7-foot-1 ate up North Carolina State's D.J. Burns Jr, scoring 31-points and has yet another enticing matchup against a soft Baylor interior defense.

Kalkbrenner is No. 1 in the country in both FG% and shoots 70.3% on 2-point field goals. Creighton runs a heavy dose of pick-and-roll through its star big, which opens up shooters on the perimeter or open looks inside.

He commands so much attention and oftentimes double teams, creating an advantage for this Blue Jays offense that ranks 28th in FG%. Five players score in double figures and three shoot 35.7% or better from 3.

Though methodical, Creighton's offense doesn't attack the offensive glass or draw many fouls. But the Blue Jays take care of the ball and normally create open looks.

I wouldn't be worried by their 3-of-20 night from 3 against NC State. This is a top-100 team in terms of 3 point %. They will continue to fire from the perimeter, especially in catch-and-shoot situations.

Baylor struggled in the first half against U C Santa Barbara, but the Gauchos couldn't buy a shot in the second half.

All season long, Baylor has been extremely reliant on its three-headed monster of Keyonte George, Adam Flagler and LJ Cryer. George is the primary option, with Flagler and Cryer both connecting on over 40% of 3s. I feel that Creighton can give all 3 some fits and neutralize them.

Shot creation will be key from Baylor's backcourt on Sunday, as Creighton will force them to make mid-range jumpers throughout.

The issue lies within Baylor's frontcourt. Interior defense is an extreme weakness, as the Bears rank 315th in 2-point defense. They're just inside that 300 mark in defensive rebounding, but they're often bullied inside by taller, stronger and aggressive frontcourts like Creighton.

Despite ranking inside the top 100 in 3-point % on the defensive end, Baylor is actually 220th in catch-and-shoot 3s. It's an average pick-and-roll defense that can be exploited by hot shooting and second-chance opportunities.

The oddsmakers have this a Pick-em game. I feel that with all the matchup edges Creighton has against Baylor, we are really getting some value on a team which just has to win the game outright.

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