Saturday, December 16, 2023

UCLA BRUINS @ BOISE STATE BRONCOS

Game Time: 7:30pm ET

At: SoFi Stadium

Selection: Boise State +6.5 vs. UCLA Bruins

It's strength against strength in this prime time matchup in the LA Bowl. Boise State (8-5) ranks sixth in the nation in rushing. The Bruins (7-5) lead the nation in run defense. The Broncos are 12th in the nation in sacks given up. UCLA ranks sixth in sacks. However, the Broncos will not have to go up against the Bruins' top defender and Pac-12 DPOY, as Laiatu Latu, who has 13 sacks on the year and leads the nation with 21.5 tackles for a loss, is sitting out to prep for the NFL Draft.

Boise State boasts a dynamic duo at running back, Ashton Jeanty and George Holani, who have the Broncos averaging 214.8 yards per game. The Broncos averaged 32 points per game this season, mainly due to stud running back Ashton Jeanty's dominance. Jeanty led the Mountain West with 1,262 rushing yards and added 14 touchdowns. They come into this game in much better shape than UCLA, despite having to start true freshman C.J. Tiller at QB.

UCLA's team is in disarray heading into this bowl. Bruins' defensive coordinator D'Anton Lynn left the team to join Lincoln Riley's staff at USC. In addition to star Latu, other players missing tonight include TE Carsen Ryan, quarterback Dante Moore, two safeties and starting defensive backs Kamari Ramsey and John Humphrey. UCLA, which has not won a post-season game since 2015, is missing their DC and several important starters. They should not be laying 6 1/2 points to a very good Boise State team. Take the points with the Broncos.