



Wednesday, March 6, 2024

TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS @ SOUTH CAROLINA GAMECOCKS

Game Time: 7:00pm ET

Selection: Tennessee -4.5 (- 120)

The Tennessee Volunteers are one of the elite teams in college basketball this year that just keeps improving as the season goes on. Currently ranked 4th in the country and 5th overall in KenPom, they have really hit their stride as of late winners of 6 in a row (5-1 ATS) and 8 of their last 9 with 2 decisive top 15 victories just last week alone vs Auburn and Alabama. With a win tonight they could secure the SEC regular season crown.

When we look at these two teams there is a wide margin with regards to their Adjusted Efficiency Margin as Tennessee is ranked 5th at +27.83 and South Carolina is ranked 44th at +15.41. South Carolina according to KenPom is the second luckiest team according to the rankings. It would appear that the Volunteers home loss to South Carolina back on January 30 of this year 63-59 was a matter of Tennessee overlooking their opponent. They were 14 point favorites at home and in that game the Vols were 8-21 on either dunks or layups, and shot 60% on free throws tying a season worst. The Vols were also 5-21 (23.8%) from 3. They really could not have played any worse. Tennessee won't make the same mistake again, especially with so much on the line.

Historically this is a matchup that Tennessee has dominated. In their last 6 meetings the Vols are 5-1 winning by an average of 29.4 points per game. UT is 9-1 in their last 10 meetings. Tennessee won both games last year vs South Carolina by 40 plus points, 85-42 at SC and then 85-45 at home. Easy to see why the Vols may have overlooked the Gamecocks the first time around. In the past 4 years Tennessee leads all SEC teams with 20 AP Top 25 wins which is 5 more than any other SEC program and ties Purdue for 4th in the country in that time span. In that same 4 year span the Vols lead the SEC in wins over AP Top 20, 15, 10, and top 5 opponents. They have 18 top 20 wins (ranked 4th nationally), 16 top 15 wins (ranked 3rd nationally), 8 top 10 wins (ranked 6th nationally), and 5 top 5 wins which ranks tied for 1st nationally. In total over the last 4 years UT has played 34 games vs AP Top 25 opponents (tied for most in conference) and have gone 20-14 making them the only SEC team with a winning record vs ranked teams in that span. Auburn is a distant second with a 10-12 record vs ranked opponents.

Tennessee will come into this game with revenge on their minds and a conference title in their sights. They learned their lesson vs South Carolina last time around and will not make the same mistake twice. Take the Vols laying the 4.5 points

Any questions or comments can be sent to: wiz@wizardraceandsports.com

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