



Friday, March 15, 2024

BAYLOR BEARS @ IOWA STATE CYCLONES

Game Time: 9:30pm ET

Selection: Iowa State (Money line -120)

Iowa St. comes off a dominant win last night against Kansas State while Baylor took care of Cincinnati in a dog fight until they drew away late to a 12-point win. The Hawkeyes were able to give their key players some rest late in the game when the victory was in hand, which should have them fresh for tonight's game and a rematch with the Bears, who defeated them last month by 2 points in Waco.

Iowa State's hole card is their defense, which was on full display last night vs. Kansas State and last month in Waco. The Cyclone's defense ranks second nationally in Defensive Efficiency, only behind Houston. None of Iowa State's past six opponents scored more than 65 points against it. Their offense struggles at times, but they are efficient. Iowa State's guards dictate whether the offense will succeed or not. Tamin Lipsey, Curtis Jones and Keshon Gilbert all average over 10+ points per game. Gilbert and Lipsey focus more on attacking the hoop, while Jones' shooting stretches the defense out. Lipsey is one of the best two-way players in America, and he should be a major factor tonight. Milan Momcilovic, their forward, adds a different dimension to T.J. Otzelberger's offense with his shooting. The freshman forward has been cold recently, shooting 2-of-14 from deep in the past five games. If he comes alive here, that's a huge plus.

When these 2 last met, Baylor turned the ball over 20 times. They had a ton of trouble handling the Cyclones' pressure. The Bears were able to compensate for this by hitting over 50 % 3-point shots.

Six Baylor players average double-digit points, led by freshman sensation Ja'Kobe Walter and playmaking dynamo RayJ Dennis. Dennis is the real key, though. The fifth-year senior transfer from Toledo is top-10 nationally in assists but he also turns the ball over 3.5 times per game, including six times against Iowa State.

The Bears' defense is awful at defending the rim. With how Iowa State's guards want to attack, this could prove the 'key' to defeating Baylor.

The Cyclones' defense created major matchup problems for Baylor once, and it could happen again this evening. Even last season, Iowa State's defense caused fits for Baylor, which resulted in a sweep of all 3 games, including one of the Big 12 tournament. It's simply a tough matchup for the Bears against this Iowa State team which suggests a wager on the money line that the Cyclones will advance to Saturday's semi-finals.

If a single game you purchased does not win based on the point spread, you will receive the next equivalent game FREE OF CHARGE.

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

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