



**Friday, March 22, 2024**

# **FLORIDA ATLANTIC OWLS VS. NORTHWESTERN WILDCATS**

**Game Time:** 12:15 pm ET

**Watch:** cbs

**Selection:** florida atlantic - 2

One year after Florida Atlantic turned into the 2023 NCAA tournament's Cinderella team, the Owls return with much of the same cast of characters. They'll attempt another deep run from where they started the 2023 bracket, in an 8/9 game.

The Owls come in off a surprising loss to Temple in the AAC tournament. However, their resume includes several very good wins. They've beaten Arizona and Texas A&M on neutral courts. In fact, they're 7-2 in such games, in addition to last year's Final Four run. This stage won't be too big for them, and that's a significant box to check. Add in that Florida Atlantic runs a highly-efficient offense and takes good care of the ball, and there's a lot to like.

Northwestern enjoyed a very good season, but they've stumbled a bit of late. The Wildcats have dropped three of their last four games and six of their last 12. Three of those six losses came to non-tournament teams (Minnesota, Rutgers, and Iowa). Northwestern doesn't turn the ball over much (in fact, they turned it over just once in a 90-66 rout of Minnesota earlier this month), but they're very prone to cold shooting stretches. They've shot 38.2% or worse in six of their last 11 games, and such a performance won't be good enough against an FAU team that's battle-tested and shouldn't beat itself.

If you like efficient, well-coached offenses, this is the game for you. The Owls and Wildcats shouldn't make too many mistakes from a turnover standpoint. However, Florida Atlantic is a higher-scoring team that knows how to finish possessions. That's something Northwestern has struggled with, and we think that's their undoing in the first of many games on the Friday slate.

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Any questions or comments can be sent to: [wiz@wizardraceandsports.com](mailto:wiz@wizardraceandsports.com)

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