

### **Liberty Bowl- Monday, December 31, 2012**

Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium- Memphis, TN

<b>(STRAIGHT UP) (AGAINST-THE-SPREAD)</b>	<b>(SU 6-6) IOWA STATE (ATS 5-6-1)</b>		<b>(SU 10-3) TULSA (ATS 8-5)</b>	
<b>THIS YEAR</b>	Away: ATS 3-2		Away: ATS 3-3	
<b>2003-2011 ATS BOWL RECORD</b>	2-2		4-3	
<b>2003-2011 ATS WIN % (NON-BOWL)</b>	Away: 44.68%		Away: 53.7%	
<b>HEAD COACH AT THIS SCHOOL</b>	HC Rhoads has been at Iowa State since 2009: 52.08% ATS.		HC Blankenship has been at Tulsa since 2011: 57.69% ATS.	
<b>OPENING LINE</b>	Iowa State -1			
<b>SPREAD</b>	This game has <b>Iowa State</b> favored by 1.5-2 points.			
<b>PUBLIC BETTING</b>	51%		49%	
<b>SU VS. THIS TEAM (2003-2011)</b>	N/A		N/A	
<b>ATS VS. THIS TEAM (2003-2011)</b>	N/A		N/A	
<b>CURRENT SEASON DATA</b>	FBS Ranking for Rushing Offense:	79	FBS Ranking for Rushing Defense:	14
	FBS Ranking for Passing Offense:	82	FBS Ranking for Passing Defense:	58
	FBS Ranking for Total Offense:	93	FBS Ranking for Total Defense:	23
	FBS Ranking for Rushing Defense:	68	FBS Ranking for Rushing Offense:	14
	FBS Ranking for Passing Defense:	119	FBS Ranking for Passing Offense:	75
	FBS Ranking for Total Defense:	103	FBS Ranking for Total Offense:	28

#### **MOTIVATION:**

We consider many factors when analyzing motivation for Bowl games. Some of the important factors are assessing: whether or not the players want to be there, team and public expectations for the team on the season, the number of players (seniors) playing in their last college football game, time, location, and fan support.

How on earth does a 6-6 team become favored against a 10-3 team? Simple: Iowa State already beat Tulsa this season, 38-23. While this is a revenge game for Tulsa, Iowa State blew through their ticket allotment and then some. Even though this location is 4 hours closer to Tulsa (by driving distance), we expect Iowa State fans to outnumber those of the Golden Hurricane.

Tulsa, Conference USA Champions, is on the verge of tying a program-high 11-win season. We expect both teams to be "up" for this game.

Tulsa has 15 seniors listed on their depth chart for this game. Iowa State has 19.

Since this game is being played in Memphis, weather could be a factor. The game time temperature is expected to be in the mid-40's and there could be some rain.

All told, we believe **neither team has a significant motivational edge.**

### **WHAT WE LIKE ABOUT THE FOOTBALL:**

In the first game of the year for both teams, Iowa State came from behind, then held off a late Tulsa comeback attempt to win, in Ames, 38-23. However, a lot has changed since then:

That was Tulsa QB Cody Green's first start with the Golden Hurricane. (He is a Nebraska transfer.) In that game, Green threw 2 INT's, and passed for a season-low of 4 yards per passing attempt. Since that time, Green has only had one game where he threw multiple INT's, and that was in his 4<sup>th</sup> game against Fresno State- a team that ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in INT's.

Iowa State's returning starting QB, Steele Jantz, had his second best passing day in his career, throwing for 281 yards. Since that time, he and Iowa State have struggled with the QB position. The Cyclones have tried 3 QB's this season, and they only seem to have passing success against poor passing defenses (i.e. Kansas- ranked 116<sup>th</sup> and Baylor- ranked 122<sup>nd</sup> in passing defense). Tulsa's passing defense ranks 58<sup>th</sup>, but if measured by passing yards allowed per attempt, they rank 33<sup>rd</sup>.

In that first matchup between these teams, Iowa State's best running back, Shontrelle Johnson, ran for 120 yards and 1 of his 2 rushing TD's on the season. Johnson is OUT for this game. He hurt himself in one of the early Bowl practices. Even more devastating for Iowa State, for the last 4 games they have been without their senior defensive and tackles-per-game leader (and arguably the best player on their team), linebacker Jake Knott. He is OUT for this Bowl game. In that first game against Tulsa, Knott had 8 solo tackles. Missing the star linebacker when playing such a run-heavy offense like Tulsa's spells real trouble for Iowa State.

In that first game, Tulsa rushed for a season low, 34 attempts. Since that time, the Golden Hurricane have established themselves as a running powerhouse, and they now average 49.58 rushes per game. Tulsa threw the ball 49 times in that game. Since then, through 12 additional games, Tulsa has only thrown the ball more than they have run the ball, twice.

Tulsa's offense has established an identity since that first game, and Iowa State's mediocre rushing defense has only suffered since the loss of LB Jake Knott. Without Knott, the Cyclones' defense allowed 5.18 yards per carry. With Knott playing (the first 8 games), the Cyclones only allowed 3.64 yards per carry.

Iowa State coach Paul Rhoads is known for being a giant-killer (see last year's Oklahoma State game), but almost without exception, that giant killing happened in Ames (at Home). More importantly, under coach Rhoads, Iowa State is 8-22 (SU) against teams with a winning record. At this point we will remind you that Tulsa is 10-3 (SU) and Iowa State is favored to win this game...

**WHAT WE LIKE ABOUT THE BETTING LINE:**

Written above, Iowa State is 5-6-1 ATS this year with just 2 ATS wins in their last 7 games. The Cyclones are 2-4 ATS since 2010 in games where the betting line is 3 points or less (either getting or giving the points). Tulsa has won 4 out of their last 5 games ATS, they are 1-0 ATS this season as an underdog, and 3-1 ATS in games where the betting line is 3 points or less (either getting or giving the points).

According to one of the metrics we use to formulate our own unique CollegeFootballWinning.com power ratings- the one that weighs in strength of schedule, Iowa State could have been favored by 2-5 points. That is largely due to the relative strength of the Big 12 Conference compared to Conference USA. According to another metric we use, however, Tulsa could have been up to a 9-point favorite. Splitting the difference and taking injuries and recent performance into account suggests there is value on Tulsa. What is more, we like the fact that we get to be on the minority side of the public betting (49%).

**BETTING CONCLUSION:**

**TAKE TULSA ON THE MONEYLINE FOR 2 UNITS.** (We are forgoing the points to get +115 or +120 instead of -110, thus ridding ourselves of the "juice" the sportsbooks take, UNLESS this line gets to Tulsa +3, then definitely take Tulsa plus that field goal, but still for 2 units.)