

ISD Game Predictions: Wake Forest

Written by Mike Frank

Friday, 16 November 2012 08:53



It's Friday again and that means game prediction time. 10-0 and looking to be 11-0 and finish their home season undefeated for the first time since 1998, the Irish have some unfinished business to take care of. None of this Championship talk matters if they don't win their next two games. Wake Forest is the next in line hoping to spoil Notre Dame's season. Will they have the same luck that Pitt had a few weeks ago in Notre Dame Stadium?

MIKE FRANK

Normally, I'd be concerned about this game, and I'm probably foolish not to be. But the big prize is within reach for this Notre Dame team. All that they've worked for is within reach. While I don't think Notre Dame will blow out Wake Forest, I do think they'll win.

Boston College and Pitt used a lot of screens and misdirection to slow down Notre Dame's defense, and I expect Wake Forest to do much of the same. I don't think it will really matter. The Demon Deacons will likely pick up some garbage yards during the game, but they won't be able to score much at all as they cannot run the football, and I don't see them getting many big plays against this Notre Dame defense. So how will they score? I can't see that happening.

I also believe Notre Dame's rushing attack will get going in this game. I can see Notre Dame racking up 250 yards rushing in this game. I think you'll see an offense starting to hit their stride in this game, just in time for USC.

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Notre Dame: 31 *Wake Forest*: 9

SEAN MELE

The formula the Irish take into this game is simple. Pound the ball to open up play-action on offense and squeeze Wake Forest quarterback Tanner Price on defense. Both plans work early and often as the Irish look efficient and focused on both sides of the ball.

The size advantage Notre Dame's offensive line and tight ends have over Wake's defensive front is evident as the game wears on. Theo Riddick and Cierre Wood gash the Deac's front and rush for over 100 yards apiece. A good mix of play calling keeps Wake's secondary at bay with TJ Jones and Chris Brown breaking free with big yardage catches. Everett Golson plays well again, but is not as big a part of the running game as past weeks because Brian Kelly wants him healthy for USC.

The Irish defense is not only keeping the points down against Wake Forest, but the yards are tough to come by as well. Their running game is non-existent and passing the ball only leaves Price open to getting pressured and hit on obvious passing downs. Manti Te'o and company leave their final home crowd wanting more as they score their second defensive touchdown of the year.

Notre Dame: 45 *Wake Forest*: 3

SEAN STIRES

Wake Forest does not run the ball well. The Demon Deacons had a stretch where they defended the run well, but that went out the window last week against North Carolina State when Shadrack Thornton ran for 163 yards against the Wake defense.

The biggest challenge the Irish should have to overcome in this game is themselves. Notre Dame is looking to overcome any possible senior day jitters while staying in the BCS title game hunt. The Irish are also looking for their first unbeaten home mark since 1998 and Brian Kelly says that is more important to his team than anything else this weekend. Wake Forest is playing for the chance to become bowl eligible, so don't expect them to roll over.

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Notre Dame's home struggles have been well documented and the Irish are looking to put together a complete game against a team they narrowly beat last year. Wake has a solid secondary, so expect the Irish to run the ball in a game that should see them top the 200-yard mark once again by the time it's all said and done. Also expect the Demon Deacons to pull out their trick bag with an offense that sees receivers and running backs throw passes.

Notre Dame: 31 Wake Forest: 6

CHRISTIAN MCCOLLUM

It's a tearful end for Manti Te'o who finishes his last game at Notre Dame Stadium with double-digit tackles and another interception. Everett Golson leads the offense, but it's Cierre Wood and Theo Riddick who account for three of the Irish's four touchdowns.

The game is never really in doubt as the Irish quickly march down the field and score on their first possession of the game. Notre Dame has a 14-0 lead at the end of the first quarter and take a 17-3 lead into halftime. When the Irish push the score to 31-6 in the middle of the third quarter, Brian Kelly is able to spend much of the fourth quarter getting seniors and some walk-ons onto the field.

Notre Dame: 31 Wake Forest: 13