Ball State vs Tulsa 2009 GMAC Bowl

Contributed by Matt Foust
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The 2009 GMAC Bowl kicks off tonight at 8:00pm ET at the Ladd-Peebles Stadium in Mobile, Alabama. The ESPN televised event features the MAC's Ball State Cardinals and Conference USA's Tulsa Golden Hurricane. College bowl picks at Sportsbook.com have the Golden Hurricane listed as a -3 against the spread favorite and a -140 money line favorite.

Tulsa followed up last year's 10 win season with another great campaign, entering tonight's game sporting a 10-3 record. The Golden Hurricane won their first eight games before finally falling to Arkansas on November 1st. Head Coach Todd Graham, in his second season at Tulsa, guided his club to a first place finish in the Conference USA West division and a spot in the conference championship game. The Golden Hurricane, 7-1 in conference play, fell 24-27 to East Carolina in the title showdown.

Tulsa features a prolific offense, which racked up a staggering 565 yards per game and posted over 47 points per game.

Ball State finished just 7-6 in 2007, but they returned 18 starters from that unit, including this season's MAC Player of the Year, quarterback Nate Davis. The experience paid off for the Cardinals as they almost pulled off an undefeated season. The Cardinals went 8-0 in conference play to win the MAC West division and a clash with East division winner, Buffalo, in the conference title match. At 12-0, Ball State could not hold off the Bulls, losing 24-42.

The Cardinals are no slouch on offense either as they cranked out 459.4 yards per game and 36.6 points per outing. Their defense also limited opponents to just 18.6 points per game.

GMAC Bowl Betting Trend: Ball State is 1-4 straight up in their last five games as an underdog.

Sportsbook.com's Ball State vs Tulsa 2009 GMAC Bowl Betting Odds:

Ball State Cardinals +3 (-125), Over 72.5 (-110), +120 (Money line)

Tulsa Golden Hurricane -3 (+105), Under 72.5 (-110), -140 (Money line)