

Iron Bowl tickets at an all-time high

Written by News Desk

Sunday, 01 December 2013 15:45 -



By Bob Martin, Publisher

If you can find Iron Bowl tickets for Saturday's 2:30 p.m. kickoff at Jordan-Hare Stadium in Auburn for sale, better bring a wallet full of cash. A friend of mine got upwards of \$350 apiece for four seats midway up in the upper deck on about the 25-yard-line.

Since their dramatic, come-from-behind win against Georgia, Auburn Football tickets for next weekend's game against Alabama are up 22 percent according to ticket-price guru Jesse Lawrence. The average price for Iron Bowl earlier this week was \$638, which makes it the second highest price of the season in the nation. The only game with a higher average ticket price this season, according to Lawrence, was another game involving Alabama, at College Station. That game against Texas A&M was perhaps the most expensive college football game of all time, and with a combined total of 91 points scored, likely worth the money, especially for Alabama fans.

The 2013 Iron Bowl is the most expensive Iron Bowl since football watchers started tracking the market, and double the price of the last game at Jordan-Hare stadium, in 2011. That game was the first since Cam Newton and Auburn beat Alabama in Tuscaloosa in 2010 on their way to a national championship. The 2011 version ended in a 42-14 Alabama win, which they also used as a stepping stone to a national title. The winner will definitely end up in the SEC championship and possibly in the BCS National Championship. In case Auburn or Alabama fans want to look ahead, the average price for SEC Championship tickets is \$538, or exactly \$100 less than the Iron Bowl. BSC Championship tickets are quite a bit more expensive and currently have an average price of \$2,421.

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In addition to being the most expensive game of the week, the Iron Bowl is also 112 percent more than the next most expensive game for rivalry week, which is Michigan versus Ohio State. At an average price of \$299, the game is 45% above the average price for tickets this year at the Big House in Ann Arbor. Many call this rivalry game the greatest in all of sports, and often refer to it as simply 'The Game'. While it's the second most expensive game of Rivalry Week, it's over \$100 less than last year's game which took place at Ohio Stadium. At an average price of \$419, that was the most expensive Michigan Ohio state game in the last four years, Lawrence writes.

While this year's version of the Michigan vs. Ohio State game may seem like a bargain compared to previous editions, it's a downright fire sale when compared to Rose Bowl tickets which have a current average price of \$715. Right now, Ohio State is slated to play Oregon in the "Granddaddy of Them All", which would be their 15th appearance in Pasadena.

Alabama starts a ten-point favorite

Alabama began the week as a double-digit favorite heading into Saturday's game. The 10-point spread is 7 points lower than what some odds makers had predicted before Auburn's victory against Georgia. In June, Alabama was listed as a three touchdown favorite over Auburn by Las Vegas oddsmakers.

Alabama has been the favorite of the bookies in 53 consecutive games and six straight Iron Bowls. The ten point spread is the lowest since 2010 when five point favorite lost to the Tide 28-27. The Iron Bowl favorite has covered the spread six times in the past 10 meetings. Up to this point in the season, Alabama has been favored by 14 or more points in all but one of its games (Texas A&M). Auburn was a double-digit underdog twice, falling to 17-point favorite LSU and beating 12.5-point favorite Texas A&M in College Station.