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# BetFan

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## TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

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1710 Ludlow - War Creation @ 9/4

[The Gentleman's List](#)

1745 Kempton (A.W) - Paco Filly @ 9/2

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## **Hitting It Straight Is Massive This Week** - By Ian Hudson

Course form is a key factor in identifying potential winners of golf tournaments and there are plenty of past results at the respective locations on the PGA and European Tours. The Honda Classic and Qatar Masters are being played at their regular homes and both courses put a premium on accuracy over distance. Top 20 ranked players for greens in regulation in the US and Europe playing this week include Gary Woodland and Richie Ramsay and they can both use that skill to contend.

The Honda Classic has been played on the Champion Course at the PGA National Golf Club since 2007. It's a par 70 track measuring 7,140 yards. In 2015 and 2016 it was the hardest non-major par 70 course and sixth in that ranking last season. The course is about finding the right part of the fairways to avoid hazards and then hitting the greens in the correct number of shots. It's not a bombers course and bogey avoidance is more important than birdie conversion.

The Qatar Masters has been played at Doha Golf Club since it was founded in 1998 and is again the host course this week. Doha is average in length and the rough can be penal. The fairways are average width but finding the rough can be expensive. The Shamal wind provides a severe test when it gets up in the afternoon and it can give a big advantage to players with an early tee time. Nearly every year early starters gain momentum by not playing in the wind on greens that have few spike marks.

The fact that the Qatar Masters is a European Tour event reflects the global nature of the tour. In effect it's a world tour less US based tournaments. However, the relative prize funds explain why the best players gravitate to the PGA Tour. Rickie Fowler is the favourite for the Honda Classic and he is at number seven in the world rankings. Thorbjorn Olesen is the market leader in Doha and his ranking is 92 which says a lot about the relative quality of the field.

Fowler is the Honda Classic defending champion and is therefore proven on the course. In fact his scoring average over 24 rounds at PGA National is less than 70. Fowler is at the top of the standings for bogey avoidance and par-3 scoring. Last year's champion usually has off-field responsibilities and more media commitments. That makes it difficult to defend a title and other players are preferred, such as Gary Woodland, available at over three times Fowler's price.

Woodland has shown improved form this year and won the Phoenix Open three weeks ago in front of the typically huge crowds. The host course at TPC Scottsdale has many bunkers and water hazards and requires accuracy to the greens and fairways. Similar skills will play dividends this week and that makes Woodland a leading contender. He's made the cut in all five starts at PGA National and was tied 2nd last year. Woodland combines course form, current form and key skills.

The average winning score in the Qatar Masters over the last 10 years is 16 under in a range from 14 under to 19 under which is quite small. At 7400 yards the track is average in length and the par is 72. The four par 5s are relatively long so there will be few eagle opportunities because only the longest hitters will find the greens in two shots. All but two of the 10 par 4s are over 400 yards and the four par 3s cover a large range in length. Hitting greens and fairways will be paramount this week. Ramsay is 11th for greens in regulation so should be a factor in Qatar.

## **Today's Sports Betting Preview** - By Rick Elliott

### **United Can Avoid Defeat In Spain**

Jose Mourinho targets competitions and works out his team's best chances of winning silverware. Manchester City have gone over the horizon in the Premier League and the FA Cup is up for grabs. Manchester United can be backed at [20/1 with William Hill](#) to be the champions of Europe for the fourth time and Mourinho craves another Champions League.

It would appeal to Mourinho's sense of importance that the only two managers that have led United to the pinnacle of the game in Europe were knighted. Matt Busby and Alex Ferguson became Sirs and they are the only managers that were in charge when

the club won the old European Cup or Champions League. Mourinho would love to follow in their foot steps and bring the trophy to Old Trafford.

United are at Sevilla tonight in their last 16 first leg tie. The Spanish club have a wonderful record at their own stadium and have lost just one of their last 35 home matches. A narrow loss or draw would keep United in the tie but they can avoid defeat and finish the job in the second match in Manchester. They are destined to meet Liverpool in the final in Kiev.

United have several injury worries but a highlight of the FA Cup win at Huddersfield last weekend was a disciplined defence. Mourinho will want to see something similar against Sevilla and the match is more about not conceding than scoring an away goal. The match is tailor made for Mourinho's aptitude for not losing key away matches. United will be a tough nut to crack so the DRAW is the bet at [23/10 with bet365](#).

### **WHAT'S THE STORY Is The Bet of The Meeting**

There is £119,000 of prize money on offer over seven races on the All-Weather at Newcastle which is a great amount for a midweek meeting. The seven furlongs handicap at 3.10pm is worth over £28,000 to the winner and is the richest race of the day. WHAT'S THE STORY won two races last year following an injury break and is the bet of the meeting at [11/2 with Betfair](#).