

A close-up photograph of a golf bag filled with various clubs, including drivers, irons, and putters. The bag is dark-colored with a red stripe. The background is a blurred green field.

# BetFan

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Win Bet - Cartmel 15:40 - Birch Hill @ 4/1

Lucky 7 Naps  
Win Bet - Ripon 20:40 - Fitzwilly @ 15/2

## **Jordan Spieth Needs To Putt Better To Contend** - By Ian Hudson

The countdown continues to the US Open with the Memorial Tournament this week on the US PGA Tour. The event has attracted a high class field and the host course provides a similar test to the one that is faced in the second major of the season. The joint favourites are Jason Day and Dustin Johnson but Justin Rose is the player in form though Bubba Watson has a game suited to the course. The field also includes Patrick Reed who won the Masters Tournament in April and Jordan Spieth who could contend given a decent week on the greens.

This week's event is being played at Muirfield Village Golf Club in Ohio which has been the host course since it was first played in 1976. It is closely associated with Jack Nicklaus who conceived and designed the course. He has also won twice at the event which is often affected by weather delays. Muirfield Village also staged the 1987 Ryder Cup and 1998 Solheim Cup.

Its fairways are wide and forgiving but for the wayward the 75 bunkers lie in wait, the rough is severe and water comes in to play on 12 holes. The course has a par of 72 made up of two nines of 36 and there are four par 5s and four par 3s. However, most of the toughest holes are par 4s, especially the 17th. The closing hole, which has a heavily bunkered green, can also be testing. The average score disregarding the par 5s has been above par in the past. It's a course that generally favours the long hitters but it's important to have a short game in good order because the greens are very quick.

There is a smaller than average field and experience in general and of the course counts for a lot. Tiger Woods has won the tournament five times and Justin Rose was the champion in 2010. The English player was an impressive winner last week and winning back-to-back events is mentally tough. Rose will be happy his game is in good order ahead of the US Open which he won in 2013. The defending champion is Jason Dufner who won by three shots and with a score of 13 under last year.

A playoff decided the outcome in the three previous years and the highest margin of victory over the last 10 years is three strokes. The average winning score this century is 14 under in a range from 8 under to 19 under. Only three overseas players have won the Memorial Tournament in the last 10 years and Woods is the only multiple champion over that spell. Rose also lost to David Lingmerth of Sweden in a playoff in 2015 so he has an excellent bank of course form but Woods has the best.

Dufner led the field in greens in regulation and strokes gained from tee to green so finding greens in regulation is a key attribute for good scoring. Hitting fairways is less important than finding the greens with approach shots and last year the four pars averaged 3.22, the highest on tour. The Nicklaus design means narrow

approaches to the greens and rough on the periphery of the putting surfaces. The course should suit Bubba Watson who was tied sixth during the trials of 2017.

Matt Kuchar won the title in 2013 so he has excellent course credentials but golf is a struggle just now. He has not finished in the top 15 in seven starts but he is third in the all-time list of earnings at Muirfield Village. However, if Spieth can get his act together on the greens the current Open champion can win at a venue named after a course on which Jack Nicklaus won one of his three Opens.

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

### **Kane Must Score Lots Of Goals If England Have A Chance**

One of the most popular betting markets in the World Cup is for the winner of the Golden Boot, awarded to the leading scorer. In 1986 Gary Lineker won the honour and he is the only England player on the roll call. Harry Kane will have to get close to emulating the TV presenter if England are to win the World Cup. Six goals should suffice to be the leading marksman in Russia this summer and that was Lineker's tally 32 years ago.

The Mexico 86 squad was good enough to win the World Cup but Diego Maradona punched the ball into the net for Argentina's first goal in the quarter-finals. His second goal was one of the best in the history of the World Cup but the dynamic of the game changed after he cheated to score the first goal and there would have been less space at nil-nil. Lineker pulled one back and almost equalised but Argentina won 2-1 and won the World Cup. HARRY KANE is 16/1 with [Ladbrokes](#) to win the Golden Boot.

It's debatable whether Russia should be hosting the World Cup. The awarding of the tournament is questionable on a number of levels but purely on sporting matters it was a strange decision. The World Cup hosts should be genuine contenders for the world title and Russia do not have the ability to win the tournament. Russia are on a run of five matches without a win and the nation is expecting better when they play against Austria away from home in a friendly tonight. Austria have won their last three friendlies but did not qualify for the World Cup. RUSSIA should be motivated and they can be backed at 23/10 with [William Hill](#) to win this match.

There's is a mixture of ordinary Flat and jumps racing today but the racing week culminates with the Oaks and Derby on Friday and Saturday. The Classics for fillies and mainly colts is run over the unique one mile and four furlongs course at Epsom which is the ultimate test of the thoroughbred. Nottingham stages a decent handicap at 3.50 over a mile and a bit and it looks an open contest. CUSTOM CAT is getting on and out of form but would win this race by the length of Epsom High Street at his best. The horse cannot be ignored at 25/1 with [Betfair](#).