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Inside Today...

**FREE Tips From Sean Haren Racing,
Declan O'Donoghue - Irish Racing and
Two Percent Club**

Top Tipsters For May 2018

**The Ground Should Not Hinder Saxon
Warrior In The Derby - By Ian Hudson**

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

**England Can Beat Pakistan In The
Second Test**

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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

[Sean Haren Racing](#)

Win Bet - Catterick 13:50 - Akela Moon @ 11/8

[Declan O'Donoghue - Irish Racing](#)

Win Bet - Epsom 16:30 - Bye Bye Baby @ 15/2

[Two Percent Club](#)

Win Bet - Market Rasen 15:25 - Hassle @ 11/2

The Ground Should Not Hinder Saxon Warrior In The Derby - By Ian Hudson

The state of the ground at Epsom on Saturday could be a huge element in the outcome of the most famous Flat race in the world. Saxon Warrior has been all the rage since winning the 2,000 Guineas and looks like being the first odds-on favourite since Camelot in 2012. However, if the going worsens it becomes more about which horse can handle the underfoot conditions better than ability and form. Extreme ground levels the playing field but Saxon Warrior is still the selection based on form.

Aidan O'Brien knows what it takes to win the Epsom Derby. He has trained six winners of the premier Classic and his horses have won the race four times in the last six years. The forecast is for rain before the 4.30pm race on Saturday which means the potential for heavy going in the Classic that matters most. Saxon Warrior will be ridden by Ryan Moore who is considered the best jockey in the world on the big occasion. He won the Derby in 2010 and 2013 and Saxon Warrior is his best chance since Ruler Of The World prevailed five years ago.

On good or even soft ground Saxon Warrior would be the right price even though O'Brien has concerns about the ground. In addition to the favourite the trainer has entered five other horses and he said in the Racing Post:

“We'd like good ground for our Derby horses as soft ground wouldn't be ideal for any of them”

The forecasters predict already soft ground will be hit by more rain before Saturday so conditions for Saxon Warrior and his stable mates would not be ideal. There hasn't been a soft ground Derby for 30 years because the late spring is often dry. The bizarre British weather has produced storms and rain this week and the track at Epsom has suffered and good ground is now a forlorn hope. There is now the element of demanding going added to the mix.

The 2,000 Guineas is often a good trial for the Derby and Saxon Warrior was an impressive winner over the Rowley Mile at Newmarket. The winner handled the undulations around the Dip and balance is vital on the unique Epsom course. Saxon Warrior was having his season start at Newmarket so there room for improvement in the Derby. Heavy ground should not prevent a winning favourite in the Derby for the first time since 2015.

Saxon Warrior will have completed two legs and could then run at Doncaster in the St Leger at Doncaster in September with the Triple Crown on the line. Oh So Sharp won three Classics for fillies in 1985 and you have to go back to 1970 to find the last colt's Triple Crown when Nijinsky won the three Classics from May to September over one mile to one mile and six furlongs. Camelot won the first two in 2012 but came up short in the St Leger and finished second. Saxon Warrior has the scope to emulate Nijinsky this year and win the Triple Crown.

Roaring Lion was narrowly beaten by Saxon Warrior in the Racing Post Trophy last October. The winner identifies one of the leading juveniles and the horse can become the winter favourite for the Derby. Saxon Warrior was much too good for Roaring Lion in the 2,000 Guineas but then Roaring Lion won the Dante Stakes at York which is a significant pointer to the Derby. However, despite the outlook for heavy ground Saxon Warrior is still the horse to back to win Saturday's big race.

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

England Can Beat Pakistan In The Second Test

There is a lull in proceedings in football since the Champions League final and before England's friendlies against Nigeria and Costa Rica in preparation for the World Cup. Where have the last four's years gone because it seems like yesterday when England were embarking with optimism on the 2014 World Cup in Brazil? It all went pear shaped back then but the hype machine will soon be in action. ENGLAND will have backers and layers at 16/1 with [William Hill](#) to win the World Cup for the second time and the first time away from home.

Cricket fills the gap and it's the first day of the 2nd Test between England and Pakistan at Headingley. The home team were humbled in little over three days in the first match and Test matches rarely now go the distance of five days. White ball limited overs cricket dominates the sport but the purest form of the game still has its attractions. The format could be reduced to four longer days to make fixtures slightly more akin to T20 and 50 overs matches. ENGLAND may not need the full quota of days to beat Pakistan and that outcome is 8/13 with [Ladbrokes](#).

There are matches in the rugby league Challenge Cup which reminds me of a trick question from the past. Who played at the FA Cup final at Wembley and the Challenge Cup final a week later? The band! Leigh are away at Leeds in the televised match and look good things to win receiving 14 POINTS at 11/10 with [Coral](#).

Traditionally the Derby took place on the first Wednesday in June at the start of a four day Epsom meeting. The track was surrounded by open top double decker buses on the infield and there were huge crowds in the enclosures and at the fun fair. The meeting has been truncated to two days and the Derby is now a Saturday event. Its Oaks day at Epsom on a card that also features the Group 1 Coronation Cup in which Cracksman cannot get beat. WILD ILLUSION is a worthy favourite for the Oaks so the horse should be backed to win the fillies' Classic over one and a half miles at 5/2 with [Paddy Power](#).