

BetFan

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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

[Shrewd Tipster](#)
Kempton (A.W) 19:30 - Insurgence @ 6/4 Win Bet

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Wexford 18:50 - Authorative @ 9/1 Each Way Bet

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Uttoxeter 17:10 - Onelaststand @ 11/1 Win Bet

Mickelson Plays Ahead Of His Biggest Week Of The Season - By Ian Hudson

The St Jude Classic is one of the traditional tournaments on the PGA Tour that is played on the same course every year. It's the final regular tournament before the second major championship of the season, the US Open. Phil Mickelson is the blue eyed boy of golf in the States but he has never won his national championship. Mickelson has finished second six times in the US Open but it is still the only major he has never won so must do so to complete the career Grand Slam.

Mickelson has decided to prepare for his biggest week of the season by competing at TPC Southwind which has staged this event since 1989. Next year the tournament becomes a golf world championship event and will move from June to August. This year it is still the last port of call before the US Open. The 2016 champion of the major is playing this week but Dustin Johnson is not in the best form. Brooks Keopka won the US Open last year but his form has also dipped. However, he got his season back on track by finishing second in the Memorial tournament two weeks ago.

The Southwind course has a par of 70 and it is similar in some respects to a typical US Open course. It puts a premium on accuracy over distance and par is a good score on most holes. Mickelson is honing his game in the competitive arena as he strives to win that elusive major which would give him the set. Only five players in the history of the sport have won all four majors at least once. Rory McIlroy needs the Masters to join the group and Jordan Spieth is only missing the US PGA Championship. No other modern player is missing just one major to complete the set.

Tiger Woods is the latest of the quintet to achieve a full house of majors and Jack Nicklaus won the lot before him. The pressure of winning a fourth different major championship is intense and that is why it's so rare. Woods and Nicklaus have taken the concept to a new level as they have won each major at least three times. Mickelson will never reach that tally but he has won the Masters Tournament three times and one Open and PGA Championship. He will be looking for some form this week but winning the tournament is not a priority.

TPC Southwind is a tough course in its own right but the set-up is akin to a US Open venue which is possibly why Johnson and Mickelson are playing this week. Finding fairways is not as important as hitting the greens in regulation. The greens are average in speed but smaller than average so finding them in the correct number of strokes is paramount for good scoring. The ball strikers have an advantage and proximity to the hole is possibly the most significant attribute. The primary rough is not as penal as in the past so there is no great penalty for missing fairways.

The best players now focus their seasons around the majors. Mickelson would probably swap 100 St Jude Classics for that elusive US Open so he won't be

concerned if he doesn't get in the mix. Mickelson wants a solid week of good ball-striking and a decent tournament on the greens so he takes some form and confidence into the US Open. In the last five years Mickelson has made five cuts and recorded three top three finishes so this is a tournament and week he likes. The course suits Henrik Stenson's game as he leads the tour for greens in regulation so he would be a good pick to win the tournament which precedes the US Open.

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

Willian Could Shine For Brazil In The World Cup

It was a privilege to see Brazil play Croatia at Anfield on Sunday and the match provided some betting clues. The outstanding performance in the first half came from the Chelsea player Willian who was involved in most of what Brazil created before the break. Playing wide on the right he had the full-back on toast and on this showing WILLIAN looks overpriced at 50/1 with [bet365](#) to win the Golden Ball (Best Player) Award at the World Cup.

However, it was the introduction of Neymar at the start of the second half that changed the game. The PSG player has been injured since February and there were some doubts about his fitness. However, whereas most players took the easy option Neymar was always looking to beat a man. He opened the scoring against Croatia with an individual goal and on this form NEYMAR must be backed at 9/1 with [William Hill](#) to win the Golden Boot for the leading scorer in Russia.

Croatia were not totally outclassed and a second Brazil goal scored by Roberto Firmino playing on his club ground was perhaps not a true reflection of the balance of the game. Luka Modric can hold his own against the world's best midfielders and he was playing in front of a solid defence. CROATIA could finish above Argentina and can be backed at 12/5 with [Ladbrokes](#) to win Group D.

The French Open has reached the quarter-finals stage and Rafael Nadal has another easy match in pursuit of his 11th title on clay in Paris. He has lost just one match in five tournaments during the European clay court season and Diego Schwartzman won't end that run today. Winning one set should be beyond him so NADAL 3-0 is the bet in set betting at 3/10 with [Betfair](#).

There are seven meetings in Britain and Ireland today and the best race is at Hamilton on the Flat. The conditions stakes race at 3.30pm is a six furlongs sprint so speed is off the essence. Kimberella has the form to win this race and the distance is a positive. However, SIR DANCELOT produced decent form in Group races over the trip last season so the horse is the nap of the day at 11/10 with [Coral](#).