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# BetFan

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

### RaceFan

Win Bet - Newbury 14:50 - Dirty Rascal @ 6/4

### Lucky 7 Naps

Win Bet - Newbury 15:25 - Beat Le Bon @ 11/8

### Value Wins

Win Bet - Dundalk (A.W) 20:30 - Aishling's Secret @ 66/1

# Age, Weight And Draw Are The Ayr Gold Cup Clues -

By Ian Hudson

The winners of the last two Ayr Gold Cups were aged four and a three-year old won the heritage handicap in 2015. Three years is not a big sample when you consider the race was first run in 1804. However, no horse older than six has won the Ayr Gold Cup since 1993. In fact from 2003 to 2014 the winner was in the age range from four to six. The winner in 2003 was a three-year-old and only two horses at that age have won the race this century. Since 1980 no winner has been older than seven. The race is too competitive for younger horses and too fast for the more mature runners.

The maximum field for the race on Saturday is 25 runners. At the latest declaration stage before the field is confirmed the top 25 horses in the weights have been allocated from nine stone 10 pounds to nine stone. Some of these horses will not run but it is likely that one stone at most will cover the entire field. Lucrative handicaps have now become akin to listed conditions races. Increased prize money is attracting horses that would not be out of place in Group 3 contests and the weights have become contracted. The last four winners of the biggest Flat race in Scotland carried at least nine stone.

The Ayr Gold Cup is rare in that it has spurned two consolation races, each run over the same straight six furlong course at the premier track in Scotland. The appetite for 25 runner handicaps means there are now Ayr Silver and Bronze Gold Cups for horses who could not get in to the main race and the silver version. The traditional view is that high numbers have an advantage in big-field sprints over the six furlong straight course at Ayr. However, the most recent evidence contradicts that theory. The whole meeting was abandoned last year so we have to look at the result two years ago for any clues about the draw.

Low numbers dominated the race and the two consolation races in 2016. In the Bronze Gold Cup the pace was on the far side so almost the entire field moved in that direction. Jockeys noted how the first consolation race panned out and moved to the far side almost en masse in the subsequent races. Seven of the first eight in the Bronze contest were drawn in single figures. The track advantage became a self-fulfilling prophecy because most of the jockeys moved to the opposite side of the track to the stands. No race is the same and any draw advantage in the Ayr Gold Cup may not manifest itself until during the race. The location of the pace is more significant than the draw.

Cardsharp is the provisional top weight and as a horse aged three receives three pounds from older horses. The trainer is Mark Johnston who has just broken the record for winners in Britain and the jockey is Joe Fanning who is a key member of the trainer's team. Neither has won the Ayr Gold Cup in the past and on ratings Cardsharp has a chance. The horse was placed in a Group 3 race at Goodwood at the end of last month and that is solid form.

However, other horses may be better weighted and less exposed. Ice Age has a manageable mark and a claimer receives an allowance of seven pounds. The horse is aged five and was allocated 9 stone six pounds but the jockey's allowance takes the weight just below nine stone but the horse has the right profile to win the 2018 Ayr Gold Cup.

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

### **Dalton Can Win The Third Prize**

The Ayr Gold Cup has acquired two siblings in the form of consolations for the big race on Saturday. Today it's the first of those two consolation contests in the form of the Ayr Bronze Cup. It's also a handicap over the straight six furlongs which has attracted a maximum field of 25 runners. These secondary races are examined closely for the affect of the draw and traditionally high numbers have an advantage on the Ayr straight sprint track. The open nature of the race is reflected in the ante post betting in which five horses were vying for favouritism. DALTON is unexposed and lightly raced (drawn 11) and can be backed at 9/1 with **Betfair** to win the bronze medal. Some bookmakers are offering six each way places.

If it's Friday night it's live Championship football but sooner or later there will be a Premier League fixture broadcast regularly in this slot. Wigan at home to Bristol City does not have the same ring as a match bringing together two superpowers of the Premier League. There's even talk of live matches at the sacred kick-off time of 3pm on Saturday. Virtually every match can now be seen as it happens from the top two divisions. In the olden days the scarcity value of a live match made it something special. Thanks to the red button supply massively exceeds demand for live matches. BRISTOL CITY generally score and one goal could be enough to beat Wigan at 23/10 with **bet365**.

Players go out in pairs in first round scores order on the second day of the Tour Championship. The last two-ball is an 18-hole match up between Tiger Woods and Rickie Fowler. The young generation of 20 something golfers grew up watching Tiger win majors and now they are going head-to-head with the former number one. Woods is the only player to win the FedEx Cup more than once and he is right in the mix this time. However, it would be appropriate if the current leading player in the standings won the trophy and \$10 million bonus. JUSTIN ROSE is 5/1 with **Ladbrokes** to win the Tour Championship and the post season title and huge financial prize.