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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

[Unity Racing Investments](#)

Win Bet - Fakenham 16:10 - Ballykan @ 15/8

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Win Bet - Dundalk 20:00 - Lost Treasure @ 5/2

[The Secret Handicapper](#)

Win Bet - Wincanton 17:05 - Silver Sea @ 11/4

Stradivarius Is The Champion's Day Nap - By Ian Hudson

Stradivarius in the Long Distance Cup is the shortest priced favourite for Champion's Day at Ascot on Saturday. The champion stayer looks the banker of the fixture but the Champions Stakes is not quite as straightforward despite an odds-on favourite in Cracksman who won the race last year. Roaring Lion is entered in the feature and Queen Elizabeth Stakes which is the championship race for milers and run over two furlongs less than the Champion Stakes. The day is completed by the sprinter's race, a contest for fillies and mares and the one mile handicap.

The fixture is rare in that every race is being shown live on the main ITV channel. The five days of Royal Ascot are the only ones broadcast in full on terrestrial television. Rights deals mean that the last two races on each day of the Cheltenham Festival cannot be shown as they happen on ITV so live coverage of every race on a card is a good endorsement of the Champions Day concept which is now in its eighth year. The culmination of the Flat season works but the Champions Series has not caught the imagination of the betting and racing public.

Champions Day is now established as one of the highlights of the Flat season, alongside the Classics and major summer festivals. The day provides the Flat season with a meaningful conclusion and takes place just before the jumps season gets into gear. There are four Group 1 races, one at Group 2 level and the challenge of a big field handicap over the straight course. The fixture has matured into a great day of Flat racing despite doubts about staging such important races towards the end of October. The going is projected to be soft and heavy in places at Ascot.

There has been a fair amount of rain this week which will favour the soft ground specialists. Roaring Lion is not extremely ground dependent but running plans have yet to be confirmed. There were hints the horse could be heading for the QE Stakes and that would be his best chance of winning a race on Champions Day. Laurens has won five Group 1 races and has been supplemented but his owner sees a major danger in Lord Glitters as well as Roaring Lion. Lord Glitters won the handicap on the same day last year and has developed into a leading miler but Roaring Lion is a worthy favourite and on form is the horse to beat.

His absence would make Cracksman an even bigger favourite for the Champion Stakes. The horse is the defending champion and missed the Arc to run in this race again. A final decision about Roaring Lion's target was being made earlier this week and the horse would be a leading contender in both races. As a horse aged three he receives an age allowance in Group contests but he gets one more pound off the older horses in the Champion Stakes. That is a tougher race and connections look like going down the mile route. Crystal Ocean then becomes Cracksman's main rival.

The stayer's race opens the card and favourite backers should get off to a good start with Stradivarius. The horse won the £1 million pound bonus for winning

selected long distance Cup races this season, including the Ascot Gold Cup. The opposition is not as strong in the Champions Day race and Stradivarius can confirm his status as the best horse over two miles and more on the Flat this season. The champion should win the championship long distance race on Champion's Day 2018.

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

Draw Suits Both Wednesday And Boro

Sheffield Wednesday have made the best of a bad job and are now in the top six in the Championships. They could not make any signings until near the end of the transfer window so had to rush into making additions to the squad. A good run of fixtures and an unbeaten record at home has taken Wednesday into the playoff places. The good work of the last two months can continue at home to Middlesbrough tonight.

One point from the in first three league matches did not augur well for the home team but they have steadied the ship. Boro have the best defensive record in the division and have drawn six of their last nine matches on the road. There are reasons to assume both teams would not be too disappointed with a stalemate so the DRAW is the recommendation and that result is 9/4 with **bet365**.

Some bright spark scheduled England's five match One Day International series away to Sri Lanka during the monsoon series. The appetite for international cricket meant this was the only window to play the fixtures but rain has affected each meeting. Only 133.3 overs of the scheduled 300 have been played but England lead 2-0. They are at number one in the ODI world rankings but Sari Lanka are average in the format.

The best bet is that it will be too wet to play all of tomorrow's fourth ODI which is due to start at 5.15am GMT. There could be a no result or an outcome based on the Duckworth-Lewis Method. At 3/10 with **William Hill** to win the match ENGLAND are too short to back for the man on the street but any other result is an unlikely outcome if enough overs are bowled but a monsoon could prevent that happening.

The run-up to Christmas seems to start earlier every year and there are far more worse examples than the Book Your Christmas Party At Dundalk Handicap (6.30) at the track tonight. Some stores have been peddling Christmas related products since August so the All-Weather track are relatively late. The course probably now think they have NOTHING TO LOSE and a horse of that name can be backed at 16/1 to win the 13 runner contest over seven furlongs.