

BetFan

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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

[Unity Racing Investments](#)

Win Bet - Warwick 12:30 - My Mate Mark @ 5/2

[TWL Pro Tip](#)

Win Bet - Hexham 13:20 - Donna's Diamond @ 5/4

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

Win Bet - Dundalk (A.W) 17:30 - Hasselnott @ 3/1

Hong Kong Can Be Good For Garcia - By Ian Hudson

The 2019 European Tour golf season begins in Hong Kong this week. The 2019 US PGA Tour season has already begun. The lesser lights have a chance to shine and winning a tournament on both tours gives a player a two-year exemption. Rory McIlroy is considering giving up his European Tour card. These facts may seem unrelated but a world tour now seems inevitable. The global tour would combine the biggest events in the United States and Europe and it would sit alongside a rest of the world tour. Patrick Reed is the favourite to win the Hong Kong Open.

The four major championships are the pinnacle of the sport and they bring together the best players. Many years ago Greg Norman proposed a world tour but the concept did not get off the ground. However, it did lead to World Golf Championship events that aimed to pit the best players against each other more often. McIlroy has identified that he must play against the best players in the world to win more majors. His loyalty to Europe is not as important as his major championship ambitions. By focusing on the PGA Tour as the rules stand he can't captain Europe's Ryder Cup team.

Professional golf is always evolving but television viewers want to see the best players in competition. The subplot to last season was the form of Tiger Woods but he can't sustain interest in golf on his own. There are no dominant individuals just now so more tournaments that involve the best US and European players is the way forward. Jason Day is the only player in the top 20 from other parts of the world. Eight golfers in the top 50 in the standings were not born in Europe or the States. The top 10 is made up of six Americans and four Europeans.

The highest viewing figures are in the US and Europe and that will attract the advertisers and sponsors. The new world tour would include the majors and WGC events and in theory the 10 biggest tournaments from the two main tours. The second tier events would form a secondary tour and there could be promotion and relegation based on world rankings. Even though the favourite for this year's Hong Kong Open is the 2018 Masters champion it would be a second tier event. Tommy Fleetwood has also entered the first counting event for the Race to Dubai.

The tournament has been on the European Tour schedule since 2002 and it has always been played at the Hong Kong Golf Club in Fanling. It's a short course on which accuracy is more important than power. However, a player with a hot putter can contend. Low rounds are possible so this is a catch up track on which players can make up ground quickly. At 6,700 the course is short by modern standards. There are only two par 5s and the last five holes are par 4s at less than 430 yards in length. Wade Ormsby from Australia is the defending champion.

Fleetwood and Rafa Cabrera Bello finished in the top 10 last year so can handle the course and are respected. Lucas Bjerregaard has the greens in regulation stats to contend this week but hitting enough fairways could be an issue. Sam Horsfield is a

potential winner in Europe this season but he is more suited to longer courses where driving distance is more important than driving accuracy Miguel Angel Jimenez from Spain has by far the best course form with four wins in the event but winning may be beyond the veteran this year. His compatriot, Sergio Garcia, has the best skills' profile and decent accuracy numbers last season so he is the player to back.

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

The Shrews Can Beat The Class Of 92

Salford and Valencia are miles apart geographically and like chalk and cheese in terms of attractions but they have something in common. Peter Lim owns 50% of Salford and is the majority shareholder of Valencia. The other half of Salford Football Club is owned by the Class of 92. One of those ex-Manchester United players is Gary Neville who had an unsuccessful spell as manager of Valencia. It's not what you know but who you know!

Salford are at home against Shrewsbury in tonight's FA Cup first round replay and the League One outfit can prevail. With so much money behind them Salford are going places but possibly not the second round of the Cup because SHREWSBURY are the team to back to win in 90 minutes at 17/10 with **bet365**.

England have won the soccer and rugby union World Cup but never the cricket version. There is a World Cup up for grabs this week and that is the one in golf. The action starts early tomorrow morning in Australia and the home team have a great chance of winning the World Cup for the third time in four events.

Marc Leishman and Cameron Smith are not the best golfers from Australia just now but as a pairing they will be hard to beat. The Aussie golfers have been planning for the World Cup for weeks and even practiced with the other player's ball. England are represented by Ian Poulter and Tyrell Hatton but that might not be a harmonious pairing. AUSTRALIA are the favourites and the team to back at 9/2 with **William Hill** to win this World Cup.

Kempton stages some decent All-Weather racing this evening and the highlight is a listed race over one mile at 6.40. It's a Class 1 contest and a Fast Track Qualifier for the All-Weather Championship next spring. Flaming Spear is the top weight and has the highest Racing Post Rating. The horse is owned by Tony Bloom who is also the owner of Brighton Football Club.

The team are doing fine in the Premier League but at the weights the horse faces a tough task. The football theme applies to Pattie, trained by Mick Channon who played for England and Southampton. William Haggas and James Doyle don't appear to have any associations with football but the trainer and jockey combination can provide the winner of the Kempton race with VICTORY BOND, on offer at 3/1 with **Ladbrokes**.