

# BetFan

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## Inside Today...

**FREE Tips From RaceFan, StatMan and  
Lucky 7 Naps**

**Top Tipsters For January 2019**

**Jon Rahm Is Tipped For the Season  
Opener - By Ian Hudson**

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

**Solskjaer's United Can Keep The Run  
Going At Newcastle**

**Your Betting Experience Better**

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

### [RaceFan](#)

Win Bet - Wolverhampton (A.W) 14:50 - Crossing The Line @ 2/1

### [StatMan](#)

Win Bet - Ayr 15:10 - Glittering Love @ 11/10

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Win Bet - Hereford 14:30 - Charming Zen @ 2/1

## **Jon Rahm Is Tipped For the Season Opener** - By Ian

Hudson

The Tournament of Champions has a limited field and only winners from last season are eligible. Tiger Woods won the Tour Championship in September but is not playing this week. The former world number one is now 43 and will be managing his schedule to be competitive for the tournament that matter most which are the four major championships. In his absence Jon Rahm can get his PGA Tour season off to a winning start on the Plantation Course at Kapalua in Hawaii.

Woods' return to the higher echelons of tournament golf was one of the sports stories of last year. He had reached a nadir when arrested for a driving offence which was put down to a cocktail of prescription medication. His mug shot was distressing for his millions of fans around the world. Competing in elite sport looked a million miles away but Woods never gave up on his dream of winning 19 majors.

Jack Nicklaus holds the record of 18 major championship victories and Woods has not won one of the big ones since 2008. He has won 14 major titles but contested in the British Open and USPGA Championship last season. In fact he led the Open at the start of the back nine in the final round but two poorly played holes were costly. Woods came from well off the pace in the final major of the season but could not quite overhaul Brooks Koepka at the top of the leader board.

If Woods is to reach his target you would think he needs to win a major this season. He has won majors on three of the host courses in the past and will have as good a chance as anyone of winning the Open at Royal Portrush in Northern Ireland which is new to the modern rota. One respected golf tipster has even recommended a small bet on Woods to win the Grand Slam at 1000/1. No player has won the four majors in the same season and it would be a wonderful way to draw level with Nicklaus.

Woods won the Tour Championship in his dominant fashion of old, beating the best players from the 2108 Tour. It was the first time some of the young brigade had seen Woods at his best and wearing a red shirt or pullover on a Sunday. He is not playing in the Tournament of Champions as this event is not on his wish list and he would probably swap 100 of the season openers for a fifth US Masters title in April. Woods has won majors at Bethgate State Park (PGA Championship) and Pebble Beach (US Open) so will relish going back to those courses for majors.

Dustin Johnson is the defending champion and favourite for this week's tournament for winners from last season. He clearly has a game suited to the host course in Hawaii but he is not the same player as 12 months ago and looks a vulnerable favourite. Kapalua is a long hilly course which is a test of golf and stamina. The fairways are very wide but the course is known for the large greens. In benign conditions it's a low-scoring course but the degree of difficulty increases in wind.

Rahm beat Woods in the Ryder Cup singles and then was an impressive winner of the event Woods hosts last December. The Spanish player has the confidence to win on any course and against the elite. Rahm has a good all-round game with few weaknesses and can begin the 2019 season by beating all the other tournament winners from last season. Meanwhile Woods will be looking forward to the Masters Tournament in April at Augusta where he has won four times in the past.

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

### **Solskjaer's United Can Keep The Run Going At Newcastle**

Newcastle are edging away from the relegation places but they could be back in the mire after tonight's home fixture against Manchester United in the Premier League. The match brings together hosts who have lost all six matches against the top six this season and opponents who are benefitting from the influence of a caretaker manager. A study has revealed that during the rest of the season a side do not win significant more points after sacking the boss despite an initial positive impact of a fresh regime.

However, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer seems to be bucking that trend and United can win their fourth match since the new man was given the temporary role. Its debatable whether Solskjaer will get the job on a permanent basis but all United can do with him in charge is win matches and score goals. Three wins and 12 goals but no clean sheets indicate where his priorities lie but the fans are loving it. MANCHESTER UNITED can keep the run going by beating Newcastle and that outcome is 8/13 with **Betfair**.

There are five other fixtures in the Premier League this evening which are a precursor to the biggest match of the season to date. Manchester City host Liverpool tomorrow night and the visitors can take a huge step to being champions of England for the first time since 1990 by avoiding defeat. A win for LIVERPOOL will see their current odds of 8/13 with **Ladbrokes** to win the Premier League plummet and they are playing well enough to achieve that result against City at the Etihad Stadium.

It's the second day of the two dedicated racing channels new arrangements today with three meetings on Sky Sports Racing and Ayr on Racing TV. Viewing figures are unlikely to break any records set yesterday because the racing is average. Paying to view Cheltenham or Royal Ascot is one thing but moderate fare hardly justifies the fee but that is the model in place. Backing GLITTERING LOVE to win the Ayr 3.10 race at 11/10 with **Paddy Power** could recoup the subscription cost this month.