

Issue 356

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BetFan

A jockey in green and black silks is riding a brown horse on a racetrack. The horse is in motion, and the background shows a blurred racetrack scene with other horses and spectators.

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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

[TWL Pro Tip](#)

Win Bet - Lingfield (A.W) 13:15 - Matterhorn @ 5/4

[Deep Thought](#)

Win Bet - Wincanton 15:15 - Theinval @ 11/2

[Early Odds](#)

Win Bet - Newcastle 13:30 - Charlie Snow Angel @ 8/1

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

Big Wins For Premier League Elite Against Relative Minnows

It might have been a tough night for Tranmere players but at least they know Tottenham showed the club and FA Cup the respect it deserves. Tranmere were still in the FA Cup third round tie at half time behind by one goal but Tottenham were ruthless after the break when they scored six goals and secured a place in the fourth round. Clearly Mauricio Pochettino is taking the FA Cup seriously and as yet we don't know the teams selected by the other elite clubs and some may play the second string. TOTTENHAM are 15/2 with **bet365** to win the FA Cup for the first time since the 1990-91 season when central figures were Gary Lineker and Paul Gascoigne.

There are 75 places between Tranmere and Tottenham in the league pyramid but Blackpool and Arsenal are only 49 places apart. It was apparent very early in the game last night at Prenton Park there was very little giant-killing potential so Arsenal's approach today will be interesting. Team selection will depend on priorities and whether Arsenal show the competition the same respect as their north London rivals. Manager Unai Emery won the Europa League three times with Sevilla so understands the value of lifting trophies. The conclusion is that he will play a strong starting 11 so ARSENAL -2 is the bet at 2/1 with **Betfair**.

Manchester United have scored 14 goals and conceded three to record four straight wins at the start of the Ole Gunnar Solskjaer era. The opposition has been from the bottom half of the Premier League but the average winning margin is 2.75 goals. United host Reading in the third round of the FA Cup today and that side are currently 23rd in the Championship so weaker opponents they have been beating since Jose Mourinho was sacked. Solskjaer will want to maintain the momentum which makes MANCHESTER UNITED -3 at 15/8 with **Paddy Power** not far fetched and feasible. Tottenham set the precedent with their approach and Arsenal and United should follow suit and record victories by two goals or more.

Laurina is the second favourite for the Champion Hurdle despite not appearing on the track since a facile win the mares' novices' hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival last March. She gets a seven pounds allowance in the hurdle race that matters most but is competing against her own sex in today's mares' hurdle at Sandown (1.50). The odds are too short so you could have a speculative ante post bet on LAURINA to win the 2019 Champion Hurdle at 5/1. Today's Sandown each way nap is LOOSE CHIPS at 16/1 with **William Hill** to win the veteran's chase at 3.00.

Trackside In Ireland - By Declan O'Donoghue

Punchestown being on the day before hardly helped after all the Leopardstown excess, yet a couple of quality contests added some badly needed spice to proceedings.

Despite the media gloss being put on it, the loss of Irish Racing from Sky Sports to behind a paywall has gone down very badly with the vast majority of racegoers.

The flip side might just be that it will actually boost attendances!

My Sister Sarah seemed to be cruising to victory in the mares novice hurdle but Paul Townend had to get busy on the 4/7 hotpot as 4/1 chance Western Victory came with a renewed late effort.

The jolly held on by a length but trainer Willie Mullins was happy enough:

"It was hard work but she had a very tough race last time and probably remembered it a bit."

"She's still learning so we're very happy."

"Probably a winners or Graded race next" the Closutton maestro added.

Odds on players had another 4/7 winner in Roaring Bull in the Beginners Chase but it was more workmanlike than anything special.

Gordon Elliott's charge is a typical Gigginstown sort, a staying chaser, and really he needs three miles already.

Much more impressive for the same combination was Sworsman, a 3/1 fancy who simply scooted home for Jack Kennedy in the maiden hurdle.

He's a brother to exciting sort Battleoverdoyen and while not quite in that league yet, make no mistake on this evidence he's getting there.

Kilkishen showed much improved form to take the handicap chase at 17/2 - from "tens" - and has really polished up his jumping.

Shark Hanlon is now targeting the Eider Chase at Newcastle where he would have a squeak.

Stamina would not be an issue but his jumping would want to be every bit as good as it was here as that has been an issue in the past.

* Recent winners for Declan's Irish Racing Service included Good Thyne Tara 15/2 (won 9/2); Shady Operator 9/4 (w 7/4); Bacahasson 9/4 and Active Force 2/1.

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