

# BetFan

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

High Roller Racing

Win Bet - Cheltenham 16:10 - Tiger Roll @ 11/8

Lucky 7 Naps

Win Bet - Huntingdon 17:05 - Arthur's Reuban @ 9/4

Sean Haren Racing

Win Bet - Kempton (A.W) 19:15 - Jai Hanuman @ 10/11

# **Rose Is Tipped To Win The Players Championship** - By

Ian Hudson

The Players Championship is the best tournament in the world after the four majors. If there ever was a fifth it would have to be this tournament due to the quality of the field. It is a major in all but name and the leading contenders this week are the top three players in the world rankings. The current odds suggest Dustin Johnson, Justin Rose and Brooks Koepka have a combined probability of 15% of winning the Players Championship and Rose is the player to back from statistically the three best players in the world. The only former British winner is Sandy Lyle in 1987.

The best players are attracted by the most lucrative tournaments and this week's renewal of the Players offers the highest prize fund in golf. It might have the prestige of a major but the quality of the field is not unrelated to the winner's cheque of \$2.25 million. The champion also receives a five year exemption to the PGA Tour and three year exemptions to the four majors. This year's financial rewards make the 2019 Players Championship money "the biggest prize professional golf has ever seen for a single tournament". Rose doesn't need the money but he can earn the biggest share.

The event has been played at TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedre Beach, Florida since 1982 when the stadium course was opened. Five players are two-time winners but Jack Nicklaus is the only golfer to have won the championship three times. The defending champion is Webb Simpson who won with a score of 18 under last year. The average winning score over the last 10 years is 13 under. The last three winners had a winning margin of three shots or more and there have been two Playoffs since 2010. There have only been four winners from Europe.

The TPC at Sawgrass was designed with spectating in mind. With water in play on several holes and penal rough it rewards accuracy off the tee. The fairways and greens are among the smallest on Tour so finding greens in regulation is an important skill. The weather can impact scoring and averages go up when the wind blows. In benign conditions the par 3s are not difficult and the island green 17th is more a test of mentality than skill. It's the par 4 holes that normally provide the sternest test and the 18th is the toughest and statistically harder than the previous hole.

Over the years an identikit of a potential winner has become established. He must have won on the PGA Tour, been a member of a Ryder Cup or President's Cup team, made the cut in his last tournament and have already won a major or WGC event. This profile doesn't eliminate many of the better players but it does identify Rose as one for the quite long short list. However, he has an edge because he seems to be in a good place both on and off the course. Rose can become the first English player to win the Players Championship and 11th overseas winner this century.

If you prefer to bet in running please note that Sawgrass is a difficult course on which to play "catch up". Due to the quality of the field the Players isn't so much a good tournament for outsiders but favourites have a poor record. Rose is now competitive at any level and at aged 38 at his golfing peak mentally and physically. Current form and key skills count for a great deal on a familiar course and Rose ticks all the boxes and is the tip to win the Players Championship this week.

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

### **Tiger Roll Can Get Punters Back In The Game**

Altior is the banker of the second day of the Cheltenham Festival in the Champion Chase (3.30) and the shortest priced ante post favourite of the four day meeting. However, after there was only one winning favourite yesterday and at 5/1 anything can happen at the jumps meeting that matters most.

In the Champion Hurdle the vast majority of bets were on the first three in the betting none of which made the frame. Punters tried to win their money back on Benie Des Dieux in the next race but the horse fell at the final hurdle with the race won. The weather was miserable early on but there was still a record crowd for the first day and about mid-afternoon the sun began to shine.

Despite the forecast for strong winds the second day goes ahead and Altior cannot be opposed in the two mile championship race. However, the card also features one of the most popular horses in training. The Grand National winner TIGER ROLL can give punters the feel good factor by winning the Cross Country Chase (4.10) for the second successive year at 6/5 with **Ladbrokes**.

The three Premier League teams to have played their second leg fixtures in the last 16 of the Champions League have qualified for the quarter-finals. Liverpool are playing away from home against Bayern Munich but the first match at Anfield was a goalless draw. The stakes are high and that can lead to caution or all out attacking. The latter is more likely so the best bet is BOTH TEAMS TO SCORE at 4/6 with **Betfair**.

The first leg of the tie between Barcelona and Lyon in France was also nil-nil so there is all to play for in the Nou Camp in the second match. Barcelona should come through the tie but the home team have conceded in five of their last six home matches in all competitions. That means there should be another BOTH TEAMS TO SCORE bet at 8/11 with **Ladbrokes**.