

# BetFan

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# **Manchester City Tipped To Beat Arsenal 2-1 in EFL Cup Final** - By Ian Hudson

Four has become three and it could be two after the final of the EFL Cup at Wembley. Manchester City will not be winning the FA Cup after being knocked out by Wigan and if Arsenal beat them on Sunday City can only do the double of the Premier League and Champions League. That wouldn't be a bad haul but not as good as Manchester United's achievement of also winning the FA Cup in 1998/99. Arsenal don't have the players to cause an upset and City are fancied to win.

It's super Sunday for soccer because Manchester United play Chelsea at Old Trafford earlier in the day. The fixture will be huge in the context of qualifying for the Champions League. City are home and hosed so its any three from four. There are only four points between United in second place and Tottenham three places below. Arsenal are now out of the running so they can concentrate on the EFL Cup.

The cream usually rises to the top in the FA Cup. In the Premier League era the average finishing position of the Cup winners is fourth and seventh for the losing finalists. The last team from outside the top division to win the League Cup as it was known is Swindon Town in 1969. There have been a few unfancied winners of the competition this century but one of the big five have won it 13 times in 18 years.

Manchester City won the League Cup in 2014 and 2016 and have won it four times in total. Arsenal have only won the trophy twice, in 1987 and 1993. Arsenal were losing finalists in 2007 and 2011 but City most recently lost in the final in 1974. The two finalists on Sunday have not met in the final before. City are the league leaders by some distance and are five places and 27 points ahead of Arsenal.

They do say form can go out of the window in finals and there have been some surprise outcomes down the years. However, the favourites have won the last six League Cup finals and eight of the last ten. Those matches have produced 28 goals in total during 90 minutes. Both teams have scored seven times and there have been more than two goals on five occasions. The winners have won to nil just twice. The most popular number of goals by any team is 1 and the second most popular is zero.

Historically, Arsenal have got the better of this fixture. They have won 96 of the meetings, City have won 51 and there have been 45 draws. There have been 10 clashes since the start of 2014 of which City have won two, Arsenal four and there have two draws. Those ten fixtures have produced 32 goals, both teams have scored eight times including in the last six fixtures and the goals tally has been over two eight times, including in the six most recent meetings. The stats suggest a final in which both teams find the net and there are at least three goals.

With regards current form City have the edge. They have won three of their last five league matches but were knocked out of the FA Cup by Wigan on Monday. Arsenal's last five matches in the Premier League have alternated between losses and wins. City won this season's one league meeting, 3-1 at home in November. If we put all this information together the projected result is 2-1 to Manchester City after normal time.

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

### **Conte May Be Saying Hello To His P45**

Lionel Messi finally scored against Chelsea and that was not good news for Antonio Conte. The Chelsea manager is now a shorter price not to be the boss at Stamford Bridge on the last day of the season than still be in his job. Chelsea are now underdogs to win the overall tie against Barcelona and progress to the quarter-finals of the Champions League. They are now [40/1 with Ladbrokes](#) to be champions of Europe again.

Chelsea won the Premier League impressively in Conte's first season but there is unlikely to be any trophies this time. The Chelsea owner does take kindly to not winning anything and the manager usually loses his job. Conte is the second favourite in the next Premier League manager to leave his job market but only because Alan Pardew's situation at West Brom is more perilous. Conte could go first.

The action on the pitch is in the Europa League this evening. Winning the competition should not be sniffed at because it provides a route into the Champions League and Arsenal should be grateful. They have no chance of qualifying through their league position so Arsene Wenger has to swallow his pride and take the Europa League seriously. Arsenal lead Ostersunds 3-0 ahead of tonight's home leg in the last 32.

It would go down as one of the biggest shocks in world football if the Swedish outfit turn the tie around and they are [100/1 with Paddy Power](#) to qualify for the next round. Even Arsenal's third string could get the job done so the second eleven should be alright. Even so there could be some value in backing the DRAW at [5/1 with William Hill](#) on the basis of little incentive for Arsenal to go for a win.

### **ANTARTICA DE THAIX Preferred To The Favourite**

There is a bizarre situation at Huntingdon today whereby six of the races are worth less than £8,000 but the other contest offers over £42,000 in prize money. The mares' chase at 4.05pm is a Class 1 and Listed event and has attracted a small but select field. On Racing Post Ratings ANTARTICA DE THAIX is just preferred to the favourite and the horse can be backed at [9/2 with bet365](#).

# Looking Ahead To The Cheltenham Festival - By Eddie Lloyd

With less than three weeks to go until the Cheltenham Festival, it's that time of the year where we need to look at how we're going to tackle the big event. Some will have their ante-post selections already in the bag, some will have an idea of what they're going to be backing and some will wait for the first day, before parting with their hard earned. Whatever camp you fall into, it's important to make sure you've got a separate pot of funds to cover the major showpiece.

I always say this around the festivals, make sure you're betting with a separate betting bank. Whereas with our day to day betting, we need to be looking for value, at the festivals, we need to be looking for the winners. It's a very small window of opportunity to profit when we have only 30 or so races to tackle.

So, what do we need to do?

First up, decide how much you're prepared to lose. Then, look through the cards and decide what races you'll be betting on. Finally, take your separate bank and divide it by the number of races you'll be betting on.

Here's what my plans look like –

## **Tuesday –**

Supreme Novices

Arkle Challenge Novices

Champion Hurdle

Mares Hurdle

## **Wednesday –**

Coral Cup

Queen Mother

Glenfarcles

## **Thursday –**

JLT Novices' Chase

Pertemps

Ryanair Chase

Fulke Kim Muir Challenge

**Friday –**

JCB Triumph Hurdle

Albert Bartlett

Gold Cup

Martin Pipe

Grand Annual

So, that's 16 races in total. I feel that I can find an angle in all of those races.

Let's say that I have £1,000 set aside for the festival. I simply divide these races into my bank, which gives me just over £60 per race, to try and make a profit.

I will now spend the next few weeks, going through the form, analysing trends, stats and data. Working through all of those, I will look at backing, forecasts, placepots, laying and some multiples. All, in the hope that I will come through the other side, victorious!

Next week, I will be looking at some of the key trends for some of the races I will be betting in and let's see if we can find some early angles before we head into the glory that is the Cheltenham Festival!