

# BetFan

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Win Bet - Chelmsford (A.W) 18:45 - Azzecagarbugli @ 3/1

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Win Bet - Tramore 12:55 - It's A Long Story @ 2/1

## **Two Big Liverpool And Manchester Showdowns** - By Ian Hudson

Liverpool are now the only unbeaten team in the Premier League and the last match in which they want to lose that record is at home to Manchester United. The great north-west rivals meet at Anfield on Sunday and there could be an upset. Liverpool beat Everton at home with a freak goal in the 96th minute but were far from convincing. Even in the days when Liverpool won the First Division year after year United had a good record on their ground. The wheel has come full circle because Liverpool are the league leaders and United are 16 points off the pace.

Liverpool were the champions of England six times in the 1980's while United were in the middle of a run of 26 seasons in which they did not win the league. There were 25 meetings during that decade and United won 10, lost just four and there were 11 draws. There were 10 Division One fixtures at Anfield and Liverpool beat United just once. The visitors prevailed four times and there were five draws. In those matches Liverpool scored eight goals and conceded 11. Liverpool won the 1985 League Cup final but United won the semi-final tie in the FA Cup after a replay and beat Liverpool in the Charity Shield in 1983.

The two northern superpowers are the most successful clubs in the history of English football. It is probably one of the most toxic sporting rivalries in the world. The two cities are only 35 miles apart. Economically Liverpool was the more prosperous city until the Manchester Ship Canal linked Manchester with the coast. It became more viable to trade with Manchester and Liverpool went into decline. Jurgen Klopp and Jose Mourinho may not be aware of the history but they realise what this match means to the fans. United can be the top dogs on Sunday.

The Merseyside/Manchester rivalry is not so prevalent when Manchester City and Everton meet. For many years the clubs were the poor relations of the bigger clubs in their cities. The dynamic has changed in Manchester and City have won the Premier League twice since United's last title winning season. However, Everton are still behind Liverpool in wealth and results on the field. Moving to a new stadium at an unused dock will give them a chance to catch up but beating Manchester City at the Etihad on Saturday looks beyond them and a home win is on the cards.

City lost their unbeaten Premier League record in the bear pit that was Stamford Bridge last Saturday. They had a meaningless Champions League match against Hoffenheim on Wednesday having already qualified for the last 16. For the first time in 18 months Pep Guardiola is having a rough ride with injuries with several key players on the sidelines. City's strength in depth should see them beat Everton in a match in which both teams should score.

There are six London teams in the Premier League which means there are 30 fixtures that bring together clubs located in the capital. Fulham's home match against West Ham is one of the least passionate and confidence could be the key. West Ham are

becalmed in mid-table safety while Fulham are at the bottom of the league. The Hammers have won their last three Premier League matches while their hosts have lost three of the last five so an away win is the prediction.

Southampton have a new manager but lost at Cardiff last Saturday in a relegation six-pointer. Arsenal are unbeaten in 14 Premier League matches but have not led at the break this season. Arsenal do the damage and score most goals in the second half so a draw at half time and an away win is the most likely outcome of this match. Meanwhile, Manchester should get the better of Liverpool over the weekend.

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

### **English Clubs Are Favourites To Win The Europa League**

If it's Thursday in a European football week it must be Europa League night and there are 24 fixtures all over the continent. The competition is the poor relation of the Champions League but it does provide a route into the more prestigious tournament. Chelsea and Arsenal are odds-on to win their matches tonight and are doing well in the Europa League. However, they could qualify for the Champions League with a top four finish in the Premier League. Team selection and motivation are key so there could be some upsets tonight but the London clubs should prevail.

The four English clubs have qualified for the last 16 of the Champions League and avoided finishing third in their group which qualifies them for the last 32 of the Europa League. In the Champions League teams from the same league cannot meet in the first knockout round and group winners will play group runners-up. The combined price for Chelsea and Arsenal to win the Europa League means ENGLAND is about 10/3 with **Ladbrokes** to be the winning nationality.

There are two darts world championships and it's the first day of the PDC version at the Alexandra Palace. A year ago Michael Van Gerwen was 4/6 to win the title but he can be backed at 13/8 this time. The 96 players in the draw are playing for a prize fund of £2.5 million and the winner picks up half a million quid. Some glorified pub game! The top 32 seeds based on the PDC rankings get a bye into the second round so it's a few days before the big guns (or arrows) are on the ochre. Apparently it's a lopsided draw and MICHAEL SMITH at 14/1 with **William Hill** is a viable alternative to MVG. Game on!

It's a day of ordinary racing but there is a decent Class 3 handicap chase over two miles and two furlongs at Taunton (3.15). On ratings six of the nine runners are within five pounds of each other in the handicap. Lillington has the advantage of a 10 pounds claimer which makes the horse the pick at these weights. However, a jockey gets that concession for a reason which is inexperience at this level. CAPELAND is ridden by a more established jockey and is the nap at 2/1 with **Betfair**.