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TODAY'S FREE SPORTS BETTING TIPS...

<u>RaceFan</u> Win Bet - Doncaster 16:00 - Looking Well @ 3/1

Lucky 7 Naps Win Bet - Doncaster 16:30 - Forgotten Gold @ 13/8

The Secret Handicapper Win Bet - Wolverhampton (A.W) 17:30 - Soldier Blue @ 10/3

It Could Be The Dustin And Rory Show Down In

Mexico - By lan Hudson

The second World Golf Championship event takes place in Mexico this week and Dustin Johnson has the course form to win the event for the second time in three years. Alternatively, Rory McIlroy looks like a winner about to happen and this could be the week in which he converts top five finishes into a win. There is a limited field of 72 players this week and no cut so everybody receives a cheque. The cream should rise to the top in one of the strongest fields this season to date.

It's just the third staging of the WGC Mexico Championship and the first two editions were also played on this week's host course at Club de golf Chapultepec in Mexico City. The course is at altitude which means it will play about 10% shorter than its length of 7,435 yards. It's a par 71 that averaged just over 70 last year but above its par in 2017. The main defence against the best players in the world are the fast greens that are about average in size and undulating. Hitting greens in regulation will be key.

Phil Mickelson is the defending champion this week. He beat Justin Thomas in a play-off to prove he could still compete at the highest level. His win in the Pebble Beach Pro-Am two weeks ago suggests he could still win the championship he craves the most. Mickelson has won three of the four majors and five in total. Its ironic that the blue eyed boy of American golf has never won the US Open which he requires to complete the career Grand Slam. This year could be his last genuine chance to become just the sixth player to win all majors at least once.

McIlroy and Jordan Spieth need just one major to complete their set. Whenever the US Masters comes around McIlroy is under intense pressure to win the one major not on his CV. Spieth requires a US PGA Championship to join the elite quintet. Tiger Woods is the last player to achieve a career Grand Slam and before him Jack Nicklaus was the previous winner of the four majors so it is a stellar group. Of the three requiring just one more Spieth has the best chance to win his missing major.

Johnson has only won the US Open but has had chances to win more majors. Even though the prize fund this week is huge he would probably swap 10 Mexico Championships for more of the titles that matter most. Johnson is long off the tee which means Augusta should suit him but the greens could be too fast in the US Masters. He has never really taken to links golf which rules out the Open and the US version does not play to his strengths despite his win in 2016. Johnson could be the player to thwart Spieth's Grand Slam ambitions in the PGA Championship.

His scoring average over eight rounds on this week's course is 67.75 and he has finished first and tied 7th in his two outings on the track. Johnson opened with a round of 73 last week and then played solidly for 54 holes and finished tied 9th. One of his rare appearances in a regular European Tour event resulted in a win in the

Saudi International three weeks ago. In terms of course and current form Johnson has the profile to win the Mexico Championship again.

McIlroy has finished tied 4th, 5th and 4th in his first three events of the season. He was tied 7th in Mexico in 2017 when he was the 36 hole leader. The former world number one leads the PGA Tour for strokes gained off the tee and is third for strokes gained from tee to green. McIlroy needs a good week on the greens to contend but that is not certain so Johnson is the more solid betting proposition in down in Mexico.

Today's Sports Betting Preview - By Rick Elliott

City Can Win Low Scoring Affair With Schalke

Two of the three Premier League teams to have played their first leg matches in the last 16 of the Champions League have not scored a goal. Manchester United and Liverpool had home matches against PSG and Bayern Munich and go into the away fixtures as underdogs to progress to the quarter-finals but Tottenham are fine.

Manchester City are in action tonight against Schalke in Germany who have exited the competition at this stage the last three times they have qualified. Tottenham take a 3-0 lead into their second leg away to Borussia Dortmund. GERMANY is 9/1 with **Paddy Power** to be the winning nationality. All their three representatives have ties against English clubs.

Bayern Munich are in good shape to qualify for the last eight but Dortmund are all but out. Schalke are big outsiders to beat Manchester City over two matches. City are still in the hunt to win four trophies and although tonight's meeting in Germany will be more difficult than the FA Cup win at Newport there are similarities. The Premier League leaders are long odds-on to bring a lead back to Manchester but Schalke are no mugs at the back so UNDER 2.5 GOALS is the bet at 13/10 with Ladbrokes.

The final of the Champions League is being played at Atletico Madrid's new stadium at the start of next June. That gives the club a huge incentive to qualify for the final for the third time in the last six seasons. Tonight's home match against Juventus is a big test and the Italians have one bloke called Cristiano Ronaldo in their side. Defensively Juve are in a bit of disarray and the home team can take advantage. ATLETICO MADRID are 9/5 with **Paddy Power** to win tonight.

There is a lucrative Class 2 handicap over seven furlongs on the All Weather at Newcastle today (3.10). There is over 28 bags (of sand...grand) up for the grabs for the winning horse and there are several genuine contenders. Keyser Soze is the top weight without a chance and Sanaadh won over the course and distance in December. However, PINNATA is a progressive horse who can handle a weight hike for a recent C & D win and the selection at 10/3 with **Ladbrokes**.