



**Hints, tips and strategies to turn you into a golf betting winner.**

**\* Plus industry insider secrets and professional pointers to put you one step ahead of the bookies.**

# Contents

## Section 1: How does golf betting work?

- (i) When are tournaments played?
- (ii) Where are tournaments played?
- (iii) What is the *"Tournament Winner"* market and how does it work?
- (iv) What are *"3-Ball"* bets?
- (v) What are *"2-Ball"* bets?
- (vi) What is a *"dead-heat"* and how does this affect your payout?
- (vii) How are bets on the *"Round 1 Leader"* market settled?
- (viii) What is the *"Top 5"...* *"Top 10"...* or *"Top 20"* market?
- (ix) What are *"72-hole match"* bets?
- (x) What are *"Top Nationality"* bets?
- (xi) What does the term betting *"In-Play"* mean?
- (xii) How to follow the weekly tournaments and get results?

## Section 2: How does the Golf Insider service work?

- (i) What if you're new to golf betting and have never placed a golf bet in your life...
- (ii) Or you've never placed any sports bets before... here's what to do
- (iii) How to receive the *Golf Insider's Tournament Winner* bets during your membership
- (iv) What exactly is the *"OVOM"*... and why it's important
- (v) What bookmakers are recommended for placing the bets
- (vi) How many bets are sent out for each tournament?
- (vii) When are the bets sent out?
- (viii) How are the bets staked?

### **Section 3: Preview of the Golf Majors in 2019**

- (i) US Masters
- (ii) US PGA Championship
- (iii) US Open
- (iv) Open Championship

### **Section 4: European Tour schedule 2018-19**

List of all upcoming tournaments in Europe this coming year

### **Section 5: PGA Tour schedule 2018-19**

List of all upcoming events in the USA this coming year

### **Section 6: Golf industry insider Q&A's**

Four leading industry insiders share their personal secrets and professional golf betting pointers

### **Section 7: In-depth Q&A with the Golf Insider (updated January 2019)**

After an original Q&A session in late 2017, this is a full length, updated interview with the Golf Insider himself

### **Section 8: Golf terminology**

Just in case you don't know your sand wedge from your 9-iron, your hook from a slice, or your Driving Accuracy from your GIR stats... here's a glossary of golf-related terms

## Section 1: How does golf betting work?

### (i) When are tournaments played?

99% of golf tournaments are played over four days. They start on Thursday and finish on Sunday.

Very occasionally they go Wednesday to Saturday, or Friday to Monday.

They are played over 72 holes, made up of four rounds of 18 holes, each round played on a separate day.

Typically the schedule is...

Round 1 (Thursday), Round 2 (Friday), Round 3 (Saturday) and Round 4 (Sunday).

Sometimes bad weather will affect a tournament. Poor conditions can make them run over into an extra day, or they can be shortened, and reduced down to just two or three rounds. But the vast majority go the full distance of 72 holes.

And if players are tied for 1<sup>st</sup> place after the 4 rounds are completed, then a play-off is used to determine the winner.

This tends to be a "sudden death" shoot-out, with those golfers tied for the top spot playing extra holes until one player shoots a lower score than his opponent(s) - and so is the winner.

### (ii) Where are tournaments played?

Professional golf is played worldwide over a season which runs from one year to the next. Bar a couple of weeks around Christmas/New Year, it's a 365-days-a-year sport.

The two biggest circuits, or "golf tours", where the world's best players spend most of their time, are the *European Tour* and the *PGA Tour* in America.

The *European Tour* actually stages events all over the world (Asia, Africa, Australia and even South America) but the majority of its tournaments during the year are held in Europe.

The *PGA Tour* stays almost exclusively within the United States and events are held all over the country... California to Florida, Hawaii to New York.

There are also joint tournaments which the tours "co-sanction" like the four Majors (the *US Masters*, *US PGA Championship*, *US Open*, and *the Open Championship*) and then various other events which are held with other, smaller tours in Australia, South Africa and Asia.

### **(iii) What is the "*Tournament Winner*" market and how does it work?**

This is the main betting market offered by bookmakers for any golf tournament.

Basically, you're trying to find (and then bet on) the golfer who wins the whole event (shoots the lowest score over the 72 holes).

Bookmakers offer odds on this market, and refer to it as either the "*Tournament Winner*" or "*Outright*" or "*Winner*" market.

Most tournaments start with around 150 players in the field. This is then reduced after the halfway cut to just 60-70 golfers.

And just to explain what is meant by the "*halfway cut*".

To increase the element of competition, and to ease congestion over the weekend, after two days (or 36 holes) the leading golfers qualify to play the final two rounds, and the stragglers are eliminated.

The cut-off point is based on a fixed number of players. For example, only the top 60 players qualify ("*make the cut*" as it's known) with anyone from 61st place and below said to have "*missed the cut*" - and in the results of tournaments you'll see this abbreviated and written as "*MC*".

Bets are settled on the final scores, after all four rounds are completed. Or, in the case of weather interruptions, it usually requires a minimum of 2 rounds, or 36 holes, to be played before the tournament winner is decided (although should this happen some bookmakers will differ from others in how they settle-up).

If your player misses the cut, your bet loses.

Now if you're familiar with, say, horseracing you should understand the concept of "each-way" betting.

And golf is no different.

So if you back a player "*each-way*" then for you to get paid out they must finish in the "*each-way places*".

As shown with the screenshot below from the *Bet365* website, the standard terms for most bookies when it comes to the *Tournament Winner* or *Outright* market are 1/4 of the odds for the first 5 places on the final leaderboard.

This also includes the scenario when your player is tied for 5<sup>th</sup> place with a number of other golfers.

And if several players tie for 5<sup>th</sup> then "*dead-heat rules*" will apply – and if you read on through this guide then you'll see a full explanation of how a dead-heat is settled by

the bookmakers.

So this is a typical example of what you'll see on a bookmaker's website...



Sometimes bookmakers will also offer enhanced each-way terms. These can include paying out on the first 6, 7 or even 8 places in the market.

Two further things to note...

Until recently *Betfair* didn't have an each-way market on their exchange for golf tournaments. This meant to create an each-way bet on *Betfair* you needed to split your stake in half and place an each equal share on the *Tournament Winner* market and the *Top 5 Finish* (like you still can do on *Matchbook*, for example).

But now you will see more and more tournaments on the exchanges that do offer standard each-way terms.

Also... if you back in the "win-only" market then you might get bigger odds, but your player must come 1st for you to collect. Nothing else will do!

**So make sure when you place your bet, you're backing the golfer in the correct market.**

It's a very easy mistake to make and there's nothing worse than thinking you've backed a winner only to find that instead of seeing a nice win-bonus being paid into

your account, you're actually looking at a debit!

#### (iv) What are "3-Ball" bets?

During the first 2 days (or rounds) of a tournament, the field is split into mini-groups of 3 players, known as "3-Balls". And to avoid a big queue on the 1st tee when the event starts, and to allow for more TV coverage, these groups begin their rounds roughly 10-12 minutes apart.

This means when you look at a tournament's *Round 1 3-Balls*, you'll see start times next to each 3-Ball (10:15, 10:27 etc).

So with a 3-Ball, you're placing a bet on which of the 3 golfers in the group will shoot the lowest score over the 18 holes played on that day (i.e. one completed round).

Now there are some specific rules which apply to 3-Ball betting.

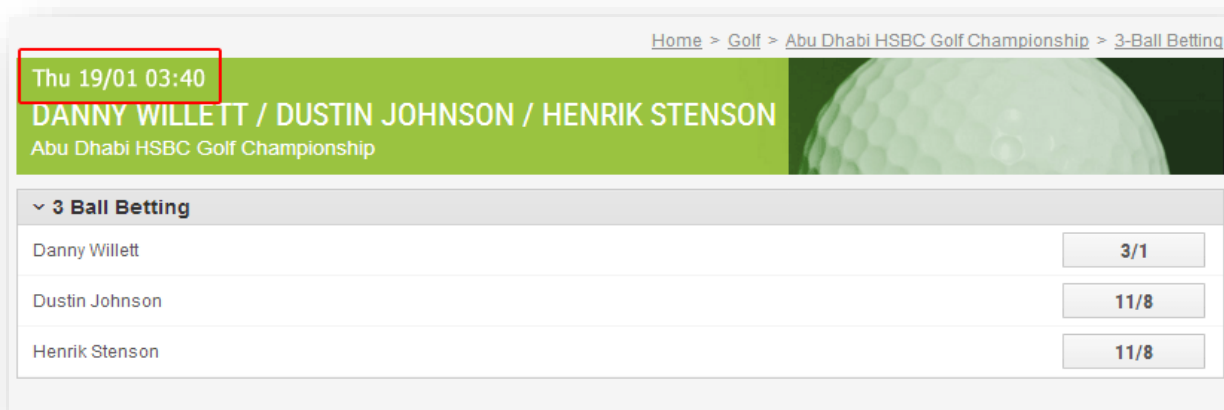
If all the players who comprise a 3-Ball don't all tee-off together - for example if one of them doesn't start through injury - then your bet is void with your stake returned.

And this still stands if one player is replaced by another golfer... there might still be 3 players in the group, but it's not the same 3 as those quoted in the odds when you placed your bet. Also, all 3 players must complete the 1st hole for bets to be valid. If, for whatever reason, this doesn't happen... it's a void bet and your money is refunded.

And it's worth pointing out as well that "dead-heat rules" apply for 3-Ball betting and, just the same as *Tournament Winner* bets, your bookmaker will have their own rules on how dead-heats are settled. And there's more on dead-heats in a moment!

But first... this screenshot is taken from *Ladbrokes* website for the *Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship* and shows the 3 players in the 3-Ball (*Danny Willett, Dustin Johnson & Henrik Stenson*) and their respective odds... **3/1, 11/8 & 11/8**.

Also you'll notice the start date (**Thu 19/01** or **Thursday, January 19th**) and crucially the start time (**03:40**). So this market will be referred to as the *Round 1 03:40 Round 1 3-Ball*.



Home > Golf > Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship > 3-Ball Betting

Thu 19/01 03:40

**DANNY WILLETT / DUSTIN JOHNSON / HENRIK STENSON**  
Abu Dhabi HSBC Golf Championship

3 Ball Betting

Danny Willett	3/1
Dustin Johnson	11/8
Henrik Stenson	11/8

One final point to mention is this... **not all bookies offer odds for every single 3-Ball group.**

You'll find some of the *3-Balls* will only be available with certain bookies.

This is because almost all firms like to offer odds on the televised groups, or those featuring the top players. But the groups with lesser known golfers, away from the spotlight, don't always get full market coverage.

Bookmakers either find them harder to assess and to accurately price-up (which could cost them money!) or they simply aren't worth the trouble as punters don't take any interest in betting on unknown players.

## **(v) What are "2-Ball" bets?**

Following on from the example of the *3-Ball* market, with a *2-Ball* the key difference – and the most obvious one! – is that there are only 2 players competing. So you have one less opponent to worry about.

Usually you will only find *2-Balls* in regular tournaments after the halfway cut has been made and the field of 156 starters is reduced to just 60-70 for the final two rounds.

And so to avoid congestion, and also to spread out the field for the benefit of TV, the players are split into groups of 2, rather than 3, players.

*2-Ball* bets are settled in the same way as *3-Balls*, but with one main difference.

In a *3-Ball*, if your player ties with another for the best score of the group (they both shoot 72, or 67 or 76) you'll be paid out according to *dead-heat* rules. And an explanation of this follows.

But in a *2-Ball* bookmakers will quote prices on the "tie". So if you back *Player A* to beat *Player B* and they both go round in 70, then your bet will lose.

Now there are ways around this...

Firstly, in a *2-Ball* you can specifically back the tie (both players to shoot an identical score), often at big odds, which you can't do in a regular *3-Ball*.

This screenshot below is taken from the *BetVictor* website and shows the odds for a *Round 4 2-Ball* in the *Career Builder Challenge* on the PGA Tour.

It was played at **16:50 Sun 22 Jan** (or on **Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 16:50**) and it involved two European players... Francesco Molinari from Italy and the English golfer, Paul Casey.



16:50 Sun 22 Jan  
Francesco Molinari v Paul Casey

ALL MARKETS (1)

#### 2 Balls - Round 4

Francesco Molinari	11/10
Tie	15/2
Paul Casey	1/1

You could have backed *Francesco Molinari* to win at 11/10...

Or *Paul Casey* at 1/1... or the "tie" at 15/2.

This is the key difference between this *2-Ball* and the previous *3-Ball* example.

You can back a *2-Ball* to finish as a draw (or a "tie"), if you think both players will shoot the same score over the 18 holes.

Secondly, another workaround for these bets...

This is where bookmakers offer "*tie no bet*" for the *2-Ball*. This means if both players hit the same score you'll get your stake refunded in full.

Because it's offering you the chance of your money-back, this "*tie no bet*" price will always be shorter than a straight win bet... but you might prefer this route if, by chance, both players just happen to post the same number for their 18 holes.

## (vi) What is a "dead-heat" and how does this affect your payout?

OK, let's begin by explaining a *dead-heat* as you'll come across this term in both *Round 1 3-Ball* betting and in the *Tournament Winner* market.

In a *Round 1 3-Ball*, a dead-heat is when two players finish with the same score for their round... so you might see the three players who make up a *3-Ball* shoot scores of 71, 71 and 75 respectively for their 18 holes.

The two players who scored 71 are the joint winners of the *3-Ball* and are settled by the bookmakers as a "*dead-heat*".

This means you get paid out to **half your original stake at the full odds**... why? Because what the bookmaker is having to do is to pay out on two winners, not one.

So let's say you had £50 WIN at 2/1 on one of the players who shot 71.

Your payout would be £25.00 (half your original £50 stake) at 2/1 = a £75.00 total return, minus your original £50 stake = a profit of £25.00.

And please note... it's half your stake that is used for the *dead-heat*, not half the odds. There's a big difference!

Turning to the *Tournament Winner* market...

You might see a winner post a score of 12-under-par for his 72 holes, with the players finishing in 2nd, 3rd and 4th place ending up on 11-under, 10-under and 9-under-par.

But then you get three players all tied for 5th place (the last each-way payout place) as they all finish on 8-under-par. Something like this...

1st	<i>Phil Mickelson</i>	<b>-12</b>
2nd	<i>Rory McIlroy</i>	<b>-11</b>
3rd	<i>Dustin Johnson</i>	<b>-10</b>
4th	<i>Adam Scott</i>	<b>-9</b>
T5th	<i>Ian Poulter</i>	<b>-8</b>
T5th	<i>Louis Oosthuizen</i>	<b>-8</b>
T5th	<i>Jordan Spieth</i>	<b>-8</b>

*Poulter, Oosthuizen & Spieth* are sharing the final EW place and so, like in the example of the *Round 1 3-Ball*, they'd be settled as a "*dead-heat*".

And if you'd had £5 each-way on *Ian Poulter* EW at 80/1... you'd get a third of the EW part of your stake (£5) settled at the full place odds.

Why a third?

Because there are 3 players sharing one place and the bookmakers have to pay out on all 3 of them.

Same goes if it's four players, you'd get paid out to a quarter of your stake, five players and it'd be a fifth of your stake and so on.

To calculate your return on *Poulter*... the standard each-way terms, as we know, are ¼ odds for the first 5 places.

So your payout would be £1.67 (a third of £5 - the place part of your EW bet) paid out at 20/1 ( $\frac{1}{4}$  of 80/1) which would equal a return of £35.07, minus your original £5 EW stake (a total of £10) = a profit of £25.07.

All you need to remember is that if the player you've backed dead-heats in a *Round 1 3-Ball* or *Tournament Winner* market, you will get a return of some sort.

It will be less than if they had won, but it all counts!

## **(vii) How are bets on the "Round 1 Leader" market settled?**

You're now familiar with how the *Tournament Winner* market works (the player who shoots the lowest score over four rounds is the winner).

Well, the *Round 1 Winner* market works off exactly the same principle... except that instead of being decided over the whole 72 holes of an event, lasting all four days, the winner is determined on just the *Round 1* scores.

It's effectively a 18-hole shootout. Best score of the day wins.

And because this market is priced up on Day 1 of the tournament, when the whole field will get the chance to play, bookmakers will offer full each-way terms on this market as there will be more than 150 golfers to potentially bet on.

So like the *Tournament Winner* market you can bet each-way on the "*Round 1 Leader*" and you will get paid out, usually, at  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the odds for the first 5 places (and *dead-heat* rules will apply).

Why bet in this market?

Most often because in any sporting event the cream tends to rise to the top, and over 72 holes the best golfers will win more often than not. But over just 18 holes, it's much more open... and factors like the weather can play a big part.

So backing a player in the *Tournament Winner* market at 250/1 might seem like a real longshot. Backing the same player to lead after *Round 1* could be the better play as it's seen as being more likely to happen (and some players have proven form as being "fast-starters").

## **(viii) What is the "Top 5"... "Top 10"... or "Top 20" market?**

This is a variation on the *Tournament Winner* market.

Unlike betting on the *Round 1 Leader*, these bets are settled at the end of the tournament, after all 72 holes have been played. But with this kind of bet you're simply backing a golfer to finish in the *Top 5* places (or the *Top 10*, or *Top 20*) on the final leaderboard.

Back them in the *Top 5* market and if they come 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> and you get the exact same payout. One price covers all 5 positions.

So you lose out on any bigger payday if your player wins the event but, then again, you still pocket a tidy return (an identical amount) if they came 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup>.

Same applies for the *Top 10* and *Top 20* betting... if your player comes anywhere from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, or 1<sup>st</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> the return (or profit) is the same.

And should there be a number of players all on the same score, tied for 5<sup>th</sup> spot... well, *dead-heat* rules apply.

The benefit of these markets is although you get a shorter price than if you backed a golfer in the *Tournament Winner* category, you get many more chances to win money... either 5, 10 or 20 depending upon which market you choose.

## **(ix) What are “72-hole match” bets?**

These are markets where bookmakers price-up just two players out of the whole field in a head-to-head match over the whole tournament - i.e. *72 holes*.

To make it competitive - and to make it more difficult to win! - they will pick players who are evenly matched and are similar prices in their *Tournament Winner* market.

So you'll get two 12/1 shots priced up together, or two players at 33/1 or 66/1, and so on.

And as a result they will usually price up these markets at 10/11 the pair, or one player at 4/5 one at Evens. So it's very much a pick 'em.

Now because different firms have different *Tournament Winner* odds, these *72-hole* match bets won't always be the same with every layer. But you will tend to see the same *72-hole* match bets with a few firms (as many of them tend to have players at similar odds in the *Tournament Winner* market).

It's worth noting as well, like a *2-Ball* bet the bookies will price up the “*tie*” should the two players shoot identical scores over all four rounds.

But as this is much less likely to happen (as they're playing 72 holes and not 18) the odds will be much bigger... so you can expect to see a *2-Ball* “*tie*” priced up at around 7/1 or 8/1, but in a *72-hole* match bet it will be almost double this price, around 14/1 or 16/1.

## **(x) What are “Top Nationality” bets?**

Always looking for ways to create new types of bets, and to generate smaller markets within bigger ones, bookmakers have long been offering odds on which player wins the *Top Nationality*.

s means we see *Top American*, or *Top South African*, or *Top Spaniard*...

As shown in the screenshot below, taken from the *Paddy Power* website, they have pooled-up all the golfers from the UK to create a *Top Great Britain & Ireland* market.

These groups can be anything from half a dozen players to 30+. Much depends on where the tournament is being played.

And, again, just like the bigger markets, you can bet each-way in these *Top* *Speciality* markets (in the example above it's 1/4 odds for 1-4 places)... although sometimes the each-way terms will vary if there are fewer players involved.

## **(xi) What does the term betting “*In-Play*” mean?**

All the bets discussed so far are ones which you would normally place before the action starts.

Ahead of a tournament starting on a Thursday, or earlier in the day prior to the players in a *3-Ball* teeing off...

But golf is a sport that millions watch live on TV and bookmakers are well aware of this, and in the technological age we live in, they offer updated odds “*in-play*” as the action unfolds before your very eyes.

And they also offer short-term markets on very particular pieces of action, for example... “*what score will Rory McIlroy shoot on the next hole*”.

It’s all done in an effort to increase customer enjoyment - they would argue! - but also to drive up turnover. To get more people betting, more often. So these *in-play* markets are constantly changing, almost by the second, let alone the minute.

Are these markets worth getting involved with? This is for you to decide. But if you are going to start betting, then you better be quick!

## **(xii) How can you follow the action and get results?**

The two tours each have their own websites, and these are the best places to follow the action.

*European Tour* - <http://www.europeantour.com>

*PGA Tour* - <http://www.pgatour.com>

Here you can follow the tournaments in real-time, see past results, look at the upcoming schedule (which will be detailed later) and get all sorts of player data and statistics.

For more obscure events try - <https://www.golfchannel.com/>

As for the *3-Ball* or *2-Ball* results... unfortunately they’re not reported anywhere, like say, a *Final Score* in football. This means you need to note down the names of the players in each *3-Ball*, or *2-Ball*, then go to the relevant website and look up the individual scores.

It might seem a bit long-winded, but it only takes a minute or two.

## Section 2: How does the *Golf Insider* work?

### (i) What if you're new to golf betting and have never placed a golf bet in your life...

Well, you'd actually be in very good company.

What I mean is lots of members first get involved with the service without having much experience of betting on golf.

But you'll quickly realise you can totally relax knowing that all you have to do is copy the *Golf Insider's* personal winning bets to come out on top over the long-term.

To be perfectly honest, betting on golf is no different to horseracing or football... and it'll only take a handful of bets before you feel as though you've been doing it for ever.

And just in case...

If you ever need any help, you can always contact the office and any questions that you might have will be quickly answered.

I can't control the results - that's the *Insider's* job! - but I can give you the very best back-up support and advice you'll find anywhere in the industry.

### (ii) Or you've never placed any sports bets before...

First thing to say... *don't panic!*

What you should do is the same for any type of betting, or investment opportunity, that you get involved with, and that is...

- Stake small.
- Gain confidence.
- Grow experience.
- Take it from there.

You're not in any rush, and the profits of the *Insider* have been built up over years, not days, so don't feel as though you have to make a fortune overnight.

Remember, this is no get-rich-quick-scheme. Rather a long-term, profit-making strategy that is tried-and-tested, proven and independently monitored.

Now when it comes to using the information that the *Golf Insider* provides you're most likely going to back the bets in one of two ways...

And the first of these is by placing the bets on the High Street (in other words, **at the bookies**) and just like backing a horse or a football team, it's a very simple process.

What you need 5 simple bits of information...

- (1) the tournament name (e.g. **US Masters**)
- (2) the player's name (e.g. **Rory McIlroy**)
- (3) the odds (e.g. **12/1**, or **13** if it's written as a fraction)

(4) the stake (e.g. **£5 each way**, making for a total stake of £10)

(5) win or each-way (note, all *Tournament Winner* bets will be each-way)

Put these 5 pieces of information in the slip (for each player) and that's it.

Simple.

And you will be sent all this information by email before each tournament starts.

Secondly, the other way to back these bets...

Online.

Now when it comes to placing bets on the internet, on a **bookmaker's website**...

All you need to do is this...

- (1) open an account and make sure you have funds deposited with the bookmaker (this can be done in a number of ways - debit/credit card, *PayPal*, *Skrill*, *Neteller* etc)
- (2) log into your account, and then use the menu - usually down the left hand side of the page - to locate the sport "*Golf*"
- (3) find the tournament we're betting on, and then find the market where the bet is advised (usually *Tournament Winner/Outright* or *R1 3-Ball*)
- (4) click on the player you want to back, a window will open up and you can enter your stake, check the odds on offer and EW terms (if applicable)
- (5) click "*submit*" or "*confirm*" and your bets should be placed.

It's very easy. And once you have placed one bet you will know how to do it next time.

### **(iii) How to receive the *Golf Insider's Tournament Winner* bets during your membership**

Each week, before a tournament begins, you'll be sent an email with details of all the bets the *Insider* is backing himself.

It will be easy for you to understand the bets because the email will include...

- The tournament name
- The player's name
- Which bookies who are currently offering the best odds
- A brief outline of the reasons behind the bet
- And something called the **OVOM** (Optimal Value Odds Marker - more of this in a moment)

Also...

As a member of the service you can be sent a free text alert (if your mobile number is logged) with abbreviated details of the bets in case you're out and about and away from your computer. Always helpful to have a back-up!



## **(iv) What exactly is the OVOM, and why it's important**

Prices will always move in the market.

In such cases, and to explain the **OVOM** in detail...

*"The **OVOM** means **Optimal Value Odds Marker**, and it is included with every bet because it gives you guidance so you can bet just like a professional gambler, and maximise your long-term winnings. Basically, as best you can, you always want to be backing around the OVOM figure."*

But what does this actually mean?

This is the minimum value price, which will always be shorter than the advised price (e.g. 6 compared to 8, or 2.25 compared to 2.75).

Together these two prices mark out the top and bottom of the "value range" about any particular bet... so you want to be striking your bets somewhere between the two.

And just to add, when there's a big gap between the advised odds and the **OVOM**, this means there's more value on offer about the bet. Making it an even better opportunity to make money.

So try and beat the **OVOM**, wherever possible, if you want to achieve the best long-term results.

Now sometimes a price will drop below the **OVOM**.

In this case you can do one of three things...

- (1) decrease your stake, allowing for the fact that you're not quite getting the best of the value
- (2) leave the bet alone completely i.e. don't back it at all
- (3) simply wait and see what happens to the odds as time passes, as often the price will drift out again.

As seen over the years, a lot of punters are perfectly happy to take any price about any bet. This isn't something to be encouraged, although it's easy to understand why it happens.

The bottom line is you need to bet smart to make the best returns... this means backing the right information, the right way. Which is why this **OVOM** figure is included with every bet.

So, in other words... try and bet at something near (or better) than the **OVOM** for best results.

## **(v) What bookmakers are recommended for placing the bets**

The odds for all bets are taken from the *Oddschecker* website, and the address for the site is [www.oddschecker.com](http://www.oddschecker.com)

This allows for a wide range of bookmakers to be quoted and for there to be a standard point of reference for all prices.

When emails are received, the names of these bookmakers will be abbreviated to just 3 letters (like you find with airports) as this makes it easier to send out bets via text message - it saves a lot of characters!

For your reference, here's a list of all the bookmakers used along with their shortened name...

<b>10B</b>	10Bet
<b>32R</b>	32Red
<b>188</b>	188Bet
<b>888</b>	888 Sport
<b>B36</b>	Bet365
<b>BBR</b>	BetBright
<b>BFS</b>	Betfair Sportsbook
<b>BFD</b>	Betfred
<b>BST</b>	Bet Stars
<b>BOY</b>	Boylesports
<b>BTP</b>	Black Type
<b>BWN</b>	BWin
<b>BWY</b>	Betway
<b>BVC</b>	BetVictor
<b>COR</b>	Coral
<b>GEN</b>	General (i.e. Generally Available)
<b>LAD</b>	Ladbrokes
<b>MAR</b>	Marathon Bet
<b>MAT</b>	Matchbook
<b>PPW</b>	Paddy Power
<b>SDX</b>	Spreadex
<b>SKY</b>	Skybet
<b>SMA</b>	Smarkets
<b>SPB</b>	Sportingbet
<b>TOT</b>	Totesport
<b>UNI</b>	Unibet
<b>WHL</b>	William Hill

## **(vi) How many bets are sent out for each tournament?**

The *Insider* uses a tried-and-tested risk and reward strategy that means you'll be sent multiple bets for most tournaments.

This allows his betting edge (which is created by his *value machine*) to have a greater chance of generating him (and you) a long-term profit.

So rather than backing just one over-priced player in a tournament, he will back, say, 4 or 5 golfers when the bookmakers odds are much bigger than they should be.

Consequently, the performance of his bets is less volatile with more frequent returns compared to only backing one player in each event... and this can be seen from the long line of past *Tournament Winner* bets that have finished in the places.

## **(vii) When are the bets sent out?**

Normally there are two tournaments every week which both start on a Thursday - one in the USA (on the PGA Tour), the other on the European Tour.

And as long as the *Insider* has identified value bets with the aid of his whizzy-dizzy *computer ratings model* and *value machine*, you'll get them sent to you every week before Thursday.

Most of the time this will be around 12 noon on a Tuesday, and the same time on a Wednesday.

## **(vii) How are the bets staked**

Over the years the results of the *Golf Insider* have been recorded in a number of ways - his own personal stakes, notional "starter" amounts, level stakes, incremental or bank percentages.

There are any number of ways to skin a cat!

The reason being, as with any set of results, it's very hard to make them applicable to everyone. To make the numbers fit with every single betting bank and staking strategy that different members of the service employ.

So there is this *Catch 22* situation of being true to the Insider, but meaningless to members... or on the side of the members but far removed from the profits that the Insider generates himself.

As a result, a conscious effort has been made to standardise the figures in an attempt to be "*all things to all men*".

And over the many years I've been working in this business - 25 and counting! - the acid test of any set of results has always been level stakes.

Fancy staking plans are all well and good, but I've found that when you put the same amount on every bet, that's when you really see the true value of the information that's before you.

So this is one method of approaching the service/bets.

And if members are backing to level stakes, I would suggest a bank of **100 points** as an absolute minimum.

But I understand some members back to small, personal stakes (e.g. betting each-way on the Tournament Winner bets and placing small win bets on the 3-balls), and then there are others (like the independent monitors at SBC) who follow the stakes advised by the Insider himself\*...

[\* My main concern with this approach is these stakes are better suited for guidance purposes, and by that I mean letting members know which bet is stronger than any other, and not necessarily a blueprint for using the service and betting each piece of advice precisely as he does himself.]

But to illustrate one staking strategy that some members have used in the past...

This would be £5 Each-Way on the Tournament Winner bets and £25 WIN on the Round 1 3-Balls... from a notional starting bank of £1,000.

Therefore it would be £2.50 EW / £12.50 WIN for a £500 bank... or £10 EW / £50 WIN for a £2,000 bank.

And these sums are in proportion to the average stakes of the Golf Insider himself, in that his Round 1 3-Ball bets are roughly 2-3 times the amount of this Tournament Winner bets.

Personally, the above figures would represent a sensible starting point based on all results to date.

And it's also worth remembering that some members will bet to higher percentages, some will also have much bigger banks... but the important thing, as ever, is to stake within your means. Build up as your confidence (and bank) grows!

Finally, in terms of the bets staked according to the instruction in the emails you will receive as a member (£50 EW, £25 EW etc)... I would use these amounts primarily as a guide to the strength of the bet when used in conjunction to another staking plan - if you're using variable stakes. Yes, some members copy these amounts exactly, others bet to 50% of the stakes, and so on, but they are first and foremost a guide.

Reason being...

It's harder to give a precise bank figure for these staking levels as the bets/stakes given on the service only represent some, not all, of the investments the Insider himself is placing on that tournament. He also bets on Top 20, First Round Leader, Match Bets, 3-balls etc.

Best advice, these numbers would correspond to a bank of somewhere in the region of £5,000.

For any questions about the *Golf Insider Tournament Winner* service  
call Matthew Walton on **01625 315654** (mobile **07752 768094**)

Or email any question(s) you have direct to [matthew@matthewwalton.co.uk](mailto:matthew@matthewwalton.co.uk)

## Section 3: Preview of the Golf Majors in 2019

Each year the standout tournaments on the golfing calendar are the four blue-riband events which carry the most prestige, prize-money and ranking points.

These are the tournaments which we have watched over the years, where the greatest names in the sport have triumphed... and some have met with heartbreak.

But they remain a constant source of interest among bookmakers and punters alike.

These are the events where the most money is wagered, and where the biggest winners can be landed.

And, crucially, from the perspective of us ("the punters") it's a time when the layers fall over themselves to offer fantastic each-way terms - sometimes running to 7, 8 or even 10 places - price up markets like they never have before, and provide the betting public with their best chance of making a profit.

So the *Golf Insider* has cast his eye over this year's four Major golf championships and delivered some thoughts, comments and early market betting tips on what should be a series of great betting events in 2019.

Each of these tournaments will be dealt with in turn...

And following the calendar, this is what's in store...

Apr 11-14 **US MASTERS** - Augusta National, Augusta, Georgia USA

May 16-19 **US PGA CHAMPIONSHIP** - Bethpage GC, New York USA

Jun 13-11 **US OPEN** - Pebble Beach GC, Pebble Beach, California USA

Jul 18-21 **OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP** - Royal Portrush GC, Northern Ireland

Read on and you'll see what he has to say about each of these events and which players, at this early stage of the season, he fancies to do well in these high-quality, but very punter-friendly tournaments.

The 2019 golf Majors...

[All prices are correct at the time of writing - January 1<sup>st</sup> 2019]



**The Venue** - Augusta National, Augusta, Georgia USA

**The Date** - Thursday, April 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, April 14<sup>th</sup> 2019

**The Tournament** - the first of the four golf Majors held each year it's the only one of the four events to be held at the same venue each year - which is the Augusta National.

The tournament was first held in 1934 and has become famous for its various unique traditions...

The Green Jacket given to each winner (which started in 1948), the pre-tournament Champions Dinner (first held back in 1952), the curtain-raising Par 3 event, played on the eve of the Masters (staged for the first time in 1960) and the ongoing practice of all the caddies wearing identical white "overalls" with the name of their golfer on the back (players could only bring their own caddies to Augusta since 1983).



Unlike the other Majors the field here is classed as an entirely invitational line-up, with no pre-qualification, and the numbers are limited to less than 100 players - the exact number varies slightly depending on how many former champions and exempt players attend.

There have been 82 winners to date... 60 USA, 5 Spain & South Africa, 4 England, 2 Germany and 1 from each of Scotland, Wales, Fiji, Canada, Argentina & Australia.

Jack Nicklaus leads the way with 6 career wins, Arnold Palmer & Tiger Woods (4 each) come next on the list.

**The Course** - The permanent base for the US Masters is Augusta National GC, Augusta in Georgia. Founded back in the 1930's the course was built on the site of a nursery (hence all the holes are named after a flower, tree or shrub).

The original design was by Rees Jones but the layout has been tinkered with over the years - mainly in terms of length - the latest by Tom Fazio in 2002. The 18 holes now stretch out to 7,435 yards with a host of signature holes and areas (e.g. Amen Corner), water hazards (e.g. Rae's Creek) and strategically placed bunkers.

The set-up of the course year-on-year tends to put more emphasis on driving distance than accuracy off the tee, but what is tested on every hole is the ability of the players on their approach to, and their play around, the lightning fast greens - good putting and scrambling are key ingredients to success at Augusta.

Here's a card of the course...

Hole	Name	Yards	Par	Hole	Name	Yards	Par
1	Tea Olive	445	4	10	Camellia	495	4
2	Pink Dogwood	575	5	11	White Dogwood	505	4
3	Flowering Peach	350	4	12	Golden Bell	155	3
4	Flowering Crab Apple	240	3	13	Azalea	510	5
5	Magnolia	455	4	14	Chinese Fir	440	4
6	Juniper	180	3	15	Firethorn	530	5
7	Pampas	450	4	16	Redbud	170	3
8	Yellow Jasmine	570	5	17	Nandina	440	4
9	Carolina Cherry	460	4	18	Holly	465	4
Out		3,725	36	In		3,710	36
				Total		7,435	72

**72-Hole Record** - 270, Tiger Woods (1997) & Jordan Spieth (2015)

**18-Hole Record** - 63, Nick Price (1986) & Greg Norman (1996)

## Last 10 Winners (and Top 5 places) -

(2018)	Patrick Reed	(Fowler-Spieth-Rahm-McIlroy, Stenson, Smith & Watson)
(2017)	Sergio Garcia	(Rose - Schwartzel - Kuchar & Pieters)
(2016)	Danny Willett	(Spieth & Westwood - Casey, Holmes & Johnson)
(2015)	Jordan Spieth	(Mickelson & Rose - McIlroy - Matsuyama)
(2014)	Bubba Watson	(Blixt & Spieth - Jiminez - Fowler & Kuchar)
(2013)	Adam Scott	(Cabrera - Day - Leishman & Woods)
(2012)	Bubba Watson	(Oosthuizen - Hanson, Kuchar, Mickelson & Westwood)
(2011)	Charl Schwartzel	(Day & Scott - Donald, Ogilvy & Woods)
(2010)	Phil Mickelson	(Westwood - Kim - Choi & Woods)
(2009)	Angel Cabrera	(Campbell & Perry - Katayama - Mickelson)

**Who tends to win the US Masters?** - The key course features are length, a generous set-up of the fairways (they are wide, with plenty of opportunity to find the greens even if tee-shots miss the target), short cut and super-slick aprons to the putting surface... and super fast greens.

This means the way to win at Augusta is to find the green (and putt well), but if you miss with your approach you **MUST** get up-and-down ("scrambling" as it's called in the stats). Also make good use of, and score well on, the reachable-in-two Par 5's.

Generally speaking experience is key. First-timers have an abysmal record here, with Fuzzy Zoeller the last winner on debut in 1979. In fact, the average number of visits before a player wins the Masters is 6!

And looking at the stats, past Masters champions also tend to start well in Round 1... if players get too far off the pace early in the tournament and it's very hard to get back into contention.

In fact since 1998, Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson are the only players to win the Masters having been outside the Top 10 after Round 1.

**The Betting** - Jordan Spieth 11/1, Tiger Woods 12/1, Rory McIlroy 12/1, Dustin Johnson 12/1, Justin Thomas 14/1, Brooks Koepka 16/1, Rickie Fowler 20/1, Justin Rose 22/1, Jon Rahm 22/1, Bubba Watson 25/1, Jason Day 25/1, Patrick Reed 28/1.

**The Bookies** - the ante-post markets with most firms will present you with a choice of either 5 or 6 EW places. But nearer the tournament you'll see more EW places on offer (up to 8 with some bookmakers) although the odds will tend to be shorter.

## Early "Best Bet" for the US Masters - **JON RAHM @ 20/1**



"Advised for this tournament 12 months ago, it's a no-brainer to put up the young Spaniard once again to emulate the achievements of his countrymen – Ballesteros, Olazabal & Garcia.

There remains no doubt whatsoever that the world amateur champion of 2015 will win multiple times in his career (he has already won on the European and PGA Tour) and pick up several Major titles along the way.

It's simply a case of "when" and not "if" Rahm will lift his first big tournament trophy.



Even at 24, there's already plenty of winning form and leaderboard experience in the book as Rahm is already a two-time winner on the PGA Tour (including the CareerBuilder Challenge in 2018), plus a three-time winner on the European Tour (including the Open De Espana 2018), and a Ryder Cup winner.

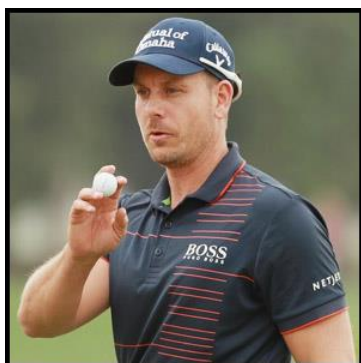
Add to this Rahm's college time in Arizona, backed up by his activity in the States means that although a European, he's as experienced in US conditions as any of his big-name rivals.

Key stats from 2018 on tour - 15th Driving Distance, 11th Greens-In-Regulation, 3<sup>rd</sup> Birdie Average - all point to a player who can compete with the best, and these are key attributes for doing well at Augusta National.

And when you remember that he has only played the course twice - finishing 27<sup>th</sup> in 2017 and 4<sup>th</sup> last year - he will surely only improve at the Masters.

There are question marks at this stage about players at the top of the market (notably Spieth, Woods & McIlroy) all of which make Rahm, at a bigger price than last year, a very solid pick in this market."

### **Early Market "Next Best Bet" for the US Masters - **HENRIK STENSON @ 50/1****



"Without doubt the Swede has the pedigree to land himself a Green Jacket...

He's a multiple winner on the PGA Tour (6 times), this also includes two FedEx Cup events (Deutsche Bank & Tour Championship), one WGC event (Match Play) and several regular season tournaments.

Stenson has also won all around the world and, let's not forget, he's a previous Major champion having won the Open Championship in 2016.

Overall his record in the Majors boasts 13 finishes inside the Top 10, and a best place at Augusta of tied 5<sup>th</sup> – which he achieved in 2018. In fact in a career total of 13 starts in the Masters, starting in 2006, Stenson has six Top 20 finishes.

So he knows the course well – check. He's proven at the highest level – check. He has the temperament and experience to win a Major – check. But backable at 50/1. Why?

Two reasons...

The first, as hinted at above, despite a number of visits he's only made the each-way places once at the Masters. And second, and more importantly, the European Ryder Cup player has been winless since 2016.

But he finished 2018 ranked No.1 for both Driving Accuracy and Greens-In-Regulation on the PGA Tour, and with stats like this all it takes is one good week with the putter, which is highly likely given his career stats to date, and early success in 2019 will see Stenson head to the year's first Major nearer the 33/1 mark.

Boosted by the fact his best ever finish at Augusta was on his last visit, Stenson fits the profile of a past champion, and is also on offer at significantly bigger odds than a number of rivals who have lesser claims than the former world No.1. That's value."

## The Market – Here's a look at the top of the bookmakers lists for the US Masters...

Best Odds Underlined		£	£20	£20	£30		£100	£30	£25	£40	£20	£30		£20	£30		£100	£15	£10	£30	
Odds Shortening																					
Odds Drifting																					
Sort By																					
		bet365	sky bet	Ladbrokes	William Hill	MARATHON BET	betfair	BETVICTOR	PADDYPOWER	UNIBET	CORAL	BETFRED	BoyleSports	BET STARS	betway	BETBRIGHT	188BET	888sport	SportPesa		
		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	
+	Jordan Spieth	11	<u>12</u>	11	10	9	10	9	10	10	11	9	10	10	11	11	10	<u>12</u>	10	10	10
+	Tiger Woods	11	12	<u>13</u>	10	10	10	9	10	10	<u>13</u>	11	10	11	12	11	11	12	11	10	11
+	Rory McIlroy	<u>13</u>	12	<u>13</u>	11	11	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	12	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>	11	12	11	<u>13</u>	11
+	Dustin Johnson	12	13	13	11	<u>13.5</u>	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	12	13	12	13	12
+	Justin Thomas	13	13	15	13	<u>15.5</u>	13	13	13	15	15	13	13	13	13	13	13	15	13	15	13
+	Brooks Koepka	15	<u>17</u>	15	13	13.5	15	<u>17</u>	15	15	15	<u>17</u>	13	15	13	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	15	15	15	<u>17</u>
+	Rickie Fowler	17	17	17	17	17.5	17	<u>21</u>	17	<u>21</u>	17	19	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	<u>21</u>	17
+	Justin Rose	15	17	17	17	17	17	15	17	13	17	<u>21</u>	17	17	17	17	17	17	13	17	
+	Jon Rahm	<u>23</u>	19	17	17	15	19	21	19	21	17	17	17	17	17	17	21	17	19	21	21
+	Bubba Watson	<u>26</u>	23	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	23	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	19	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	23	21	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>
+	Jason Day	23	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	21	<u>26</u>	23	21	23	23	<u>26</u>	23	21	23	21	23	21	21	21	23	21
+	Patrick Reed	29	29	26	26	<u>30</u>	29	29	29	29	26	29	26	29	29	29	29	26	29	29	29
+	Hideki Matsuyama	34	29	34	34	<u>35</u>	31	29	31	34	34	29	29	34	29	29	34	29	34	34	34
+	Bryson DeChambeau	21	29	26	26	19	23	26	23	21	26	<u>41</u>	26	26	26	26	26	29	34	21	26
+	Tommy Fleetwood	34	34	34	34	30	34	29	34	<u>41</u>	34	26	34	34	34	<u>41</u>	29	<u>41</u>	34	<u>41</u>	29
+	Sergio Garcia	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	34	36	<u>41</u>	36	34	<u>41</u>	34	34	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	34	34	<u>41</u>
+	Paul Casey	41	34	34	34	<u>43</u>	36	34	36	34	34	29	34	34	41	34	41	34	41	34	41
+	Cameron Champ	41	41	41	34	31	29	41	29	<u>46</u>	41		41		41		34		<u>46</u>		
+	Henrik Stenson	<u>51</u>	41	34	41	34	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	41	34	41	41	<u>51</u>	41	<u>51</u>	41	34	41	41	41
+	Phil Mickelson	46	34	41	34	41	41	<u>51</u>	41	<u>51</u>	41	34	34	41	34	34	41	36	41	<u>51</u>	41
+	Francesco Molinari	34	<u>51</u>	41	41	26	36	41	36	41	41	34	41	41	41	34	41	41	41	41	41
+	Marc Leishman	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	46	<u>51</u>	41	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>
+	Adam Scott	<u>61</u>	51	51	51	51	41	51	41	51	51	41	41	51	41	41	41	34	41	51	41
+	Tony Finau	34	34	34	41	31	41	41	41	34	34	<u>67</u>	41	41	34	41	41	26	41	34	41
+	Matt Kuchar	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	51	<u>67</u>	41	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	41	<u>67</u>	51	61	51	<u>67</u>	51	51	51

© Oddschecker (all prices shown to decimal odds, dated 01/01/19)



**The Venue** - Bethpage GC (Black Course), Farmingdale, New York USA

**The Date** - Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, May 19<sup>th</sup> 2019

**The Tournament** - Known as the US PGA or PGA Championship the event is run by the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) of America.

It started out as a matchplay tournament in 1916, switching to the current, and standard, strokeplay format in 1958. And although it's not played at the same course each year, the custom with the PGA is that it's usually staged towards the East of the mainland US - with New York State hosting the most renewals (13). And to date only 10 times has the tournament been held "out West".

The field is the normal 156, made up of the game's leading players, past champions and special invites. There are also 20 places for players drawn from the Professional National Championship (a competition for club professionals), so there's always a fair share of unknowns in the line-up.



There have been 98 PGA champions - mostly US players! To date 80 times the trophy has been lifted by an American, then Australia (5), England, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Fiji & Northern Ireland (2 each) and Ireland, South Korea & Germany (all 1).

Walter Hagen and Jack Nicklaus (5) have won the PGA most times, followed by Tiger Woods (4).

Formerly billed as "*Glory's last shot*" - because it was the last Major of the calendar year - 2019 marks a new place in the schedule for the PGA Championship as it now slots in between the US Masters and the US Open.

In the past the event has had a reputation for being won by first time Major champions, and seven of the last 10 winners have been maidens.

**The Course** – this year the PGA is being played at Bethpage GC in Farmingdale, New York, on the famous (or rather infamous!) Black Course. Opened in 1936, the 18-hole layout – designed by famous course architect A.W. Tillinghast - has hosted two previous US Opens (the latest in 2009) and The Barclays (part of the FedEx Cup series) in 2012. And you can see the course yardages for these tournaments shown below – US Open in **black** and The Barclays in **green**.

Regularly ranked among the top, and most difficult courses in America, Bethpage is a long, demanding par 70/71.

And even if the course set-up isn't as penal as it might be for, say the US Open, it remains some test for the players with the winning score most likely to be single figures under-par.

Tee	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out
2009 U.S. Open	430	389	232	517	478	408	525	210	460	3649
Par	4	4	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	35
Par	4	4	3	5	4	4	5	3	4	36
2012 Barclays	430	389	230	517	478	408	553	210	460	3675
Blue	430	389	230	517	478	408	553	210	460	3675
White	429	354	158	461	423	386	502	191	385	3289
Red	426	346	128	438	401	376	489	152	293	3049

Tee	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
2009 U.S. Open	508	435	504	605	158	459	490	207	411	3777	7426
Par	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	3	4	35	70
Par	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	3	4	35	71
2012 Barclays	502	435	501	608	161	478	490	207	411	3793	7468
Blue	502	435	501	608	161	478	490	207	411	3793	7468
White	434	421	432	480	152	430	457	195	394	3395	6684
Red	377	412	403	472	139	417	431	178	345	3174	6223

**72-Hole Record** - 265, David Toms (2001)

**18-Hole Record** - 63, Bruce Crampton (1975)

## Last 10 Winners (and Top 5 places) -

(2018)	Brooks Koepka	(Woods - Scott - Cink & Rahm)
(2017)	Justin Thomas	(Molinari, Oosthuizen & Reed - Fowler & Matsuyama)
(2016)	Jimmy Walker	(Day - Summerhays - Grace, Koepka & Matsuyama)
(2015)	Jason Day (Spieth	- Grace - Rose - Koepka & Lahiri)
(2014)	Rory McIlroy	(Mickelson - Fowler & Stenson - Furyk & Palmer)
(2013)	Jason Dufner	(Furyk - Stenson - Blixt - Piercy & Scott)
(2012)	Rory McIlroy	(Lynn - Bradley, Pettersson, Poulter & Rose)
(2011)	Keegan Bradley	(Dufner - Hansen - Karlsson, Toms & Verplank)
(2010)	Martin Kaymer	(Watson - Johnson & McIlroy - Dufner, Elkington & Johnson)
(2009)	Y.E. Yang	(Woods - McIlroy & Westwood - Glover)

## Who tends to win the US PGA Championship?

The view of many pundits that the PGA is a tournament where maidens (first time winners) hold sway does have some validity... but in a sport where current and past form has such a bearing on results, it's hard to base a whole betting strategy on something a player hasn't done, rather than has, in his career.

The theory is probably based on the fact that the PGA is the lowest of the four Majors in the pecking order, mainly because it previously came towards the end of the year (when many top players might either back-sliding after a good season, or desperately trying to find form if their year to date hasn't gone to plan). What will be interesting to see is if the move in the calendar, to May, increases the prestige of this tournament and so sees the bigger guns dominate in the way they have other leading events. The answer? Quite possibly.

So right now, who are you looking for in terms of a likely champion... well, the recent list of winners suggests an improving player, one at the younger end of the spectrum, a previous Tour winner and someone with some prior form in a Major (though, as we've seen, not necessarily winning form).

**The Betting** - Dustin Johnson 10/1, Justin Thomas 14/1, Tiger Woods 14/1, Brooks Koepka 16/1, Rory McIlroy 16/1, Jordan Spieth 20/1, Jason Day 22/1, Justin Rose 22/1, Rickie Fowler 25/1, Jon Rahm 25/1, Bryson DeChambeau 28/1.

**The Bookies** - the ante-post markets with most firms will present you with a choice of either 5 or 6 EW places. But nearer the tournament you'll see more EW places on offer (up to 8 with some bookmakers) although the odds will tend to be shorter.

## Early "Best Bet" for the US PGA Championship - **TONY FINAU @ 50/1**



"There's going to be two ways to approach the betting for the PGA... going by previous history, there's going to be a tendency for some to choose younger, less decorated players... guys who are chasing their first Major.

But because of the move to much earlier in the year, which will undoubtedly raise the profile and prestige of the event, there's a clear line of argument that says the PGA will become another tournament dominated by the top players.

Finau, if anything, sits somewhere between the two camps – but probably has more than a foot in the first.

This is because despite his stellar rise through the rankings, to a current position inside the world's Top 20, the man from Salt Lake City still only has one career win to his name (Puerto Rico Open 2016).

But to counter this, Finau posted 11 eye-catching Top 10 finishes in 28 starts during 2018, including three runners-up spots.

He also finished 10<sup>th</sup> at the US Masters, 5<sup>th</sup> in the US Open and 9<sup>th</sup> in the Open Championship. Add to that Top 10 efforts in WGC events and EW places in the FedEx Cup... so he's clearly got a big win on his radar.

Given also that this year the PGA is held at Bethpage, what can't be ignored is the 12<sup>th</sup> place finish Finau recorded in The Barclays, on this very course in 2016.

And on a long course his prodigious driving will be a key asset - he's been Top 10 for Driving Distance in 2017 & 2018. He's also been Top 20 for Greens-In-Regulation during both these years.

So all the ingredients are there for Finau to go close, and 50/1 in what will be a wide-open betting heat looks value considering his profile and 2018 record in big events."

### **Early Market "Next Best Bet" for the US PGA Championship - **BUBBA WATSON** @ 66/1**



"On the one hand with have potential and inexperience, with Finau, but on the other with Gerry Lester aka "Bubba" we have winning ability in spades.

Here we have a 12-time PGA Tour winner, included in that two US Masters titles in 2012 & 2014... so it's quite clear Watson has the ability and the nerve to get the job done at the highest level.

He remains though a streaky, inconsistent performer - which explains his inflated odds in this market.

But two factors help to make the case for Bubba in the PGA... firstly, his course form.

Playing the infamous Black Course in 2016 he finished 13<sup>th</sup> in The Barclays, and back in 2012 he was 10<sup>th</sup>. And it's also worth noting that in the US Open 2009, again played on this course, he was 8<sup>th</sup> going into Sunday (two shots off 2<sup>nd</sup> place) before slipping down to finish tied 18<sup>th</sup>.

So Watson clearly plays this tough course better than most.

Secondly, his PGA record is pretty poor (MC-MC-60-21-64-MC) in his last six starts - but this is missing a trick.

Form, fitness and motivation must surely have a hand in this below-average form, added to the tournament's end of Summer scheduling. Meaning the move forward to May, plus the venue, should only enhance Watson's desire, and so chance of winning.

This looks a big value price for a proven winner and course specialist. A big-hitter who should relish the course set-up and has plenty of good memories to boost confidence."



## The Market – Here's a look at the top of the market for the US PGA Championship...

Best Odds Underlined

Odds Shortening

Odds Drifting

Sort By ▼

Best Odds Underlined		£	£20	£20	£30		£100	£30	£20	£40	£20	£30		£10	£30		£100	£10	£30		£20
Odds Shortening																					
Odds Drifting																					
Sort By		bet365	sky bet	Ladbrokes	William HILL	MARATHON	betfair	BETVICTOR	PADDYPOWER	UNIBET	CORAL	BETFRED	BoyleSports	BLACK TYPE	betway	BETBRIGHT	188BET	888sport	SportPesa	ROYAL PANDA	
		5/14	5/14	5/14	5/14	5/14	6/5	5/14	6/5	5/14	5/14	5/14	6/5	5/14	5/14	5/14	5/14	5/14	5/14	5/14	
+	Dustin Johnson	10	11	10	10	<u>11.5</u>	11	10	11	11	10	11	10	10	10	10	9.5	10	11	9.5	10
+	Justin Thomas	13	<u>15</u>	13	13	13.5	13	13	13	<u>15</u>	13	<u>15</u>	13	13	13	13	13	<u>15</u>	13	13	
+	Tiger Woods	11	13	13	13	12	13	11	13	13	13	13	10	12	<u>15</u>	13	11	12	13	11	11
+	Brooks Koepka	15	15	15	15	13	<u>17</u>	15	<u>17</u>	15	15	15	13	15	15	15	<u>17</u>	15	15	<u>17</u>	15
+	Rory McIlroy	13	13	13	13	13.5	<u>17</u>	13	<u>17</u>	13	13	15	13	13	13	13	12.5	13	13	12.5	13
+	Jordan Spieth	17	<u>21</u>	17	17	17.5	19	17	19	17	17	17	15	17	17	17	16.5	15	17	16.5	17
+	Jason Day	19	21	19	21	19	<u>23</u>	19	<u>23</u>	17	19	21	21	19	19	19	18	19	17	18	19
+	Justin Rose	21	<u>23</u>	21	17	22	19	21	19	15	21	21	21	19	21	21	21	21	15	21	21
+	Rickie Fowler	21	23	21	21	23	<u>26</u>	21	<u>26</u>	23	21	23	17	23	21	21	<u>21</u>	21	23	<u>21</u>	21
+	Jon Rahm	21	21	21	21	<u>26</u>	19	21	19	19	21	23	21	21	19	21	20	21	19	20	21
+	Bryson DeChambeau	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	26	<u>29</u>	26	23	26	21	<u>29</u>	26	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	26	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	21	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>
+	Francesco Molinari	31	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	26	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	30	29	<u>34</u>	30	29
+	Tommy Fleetwood	31	29	34	26	<u>35</u>	34	26	34	31	34	34	34	34	29	34	31	29	31	31	29
+	Patrick Reed	34	<u>41</u>	34	34	31	<u>41</u>	34	<u>41</u>	31	34	<u>41</u>	34	34	34	34	33	29	31	33	34
+	Hideki Matsuyama	41	41	41		<u>43</u>	41	34	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	40	41	41	40	41
+	Cameron Champ	41	<u>51</u>	41	34	34	41	34	41		41	41		41	41	41		41			
+	Patrick Cantlay	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>		41	41	41	41	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	41	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>
+	Henrik Stenson	46	41	41	41	34	34	41	34	41	41	41	<u>51</u>	41	41	41	46	<u>51</u>	41	46	41
+	Tony Finau	36	41	41	34	34	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	41	34	<u>51</u>	41	41	41	49	41	<u>51</u>	49	34
+	Alexander Noren	<u>67</u>	41	61	51	56	51	41	51	51	61	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	61	<u>67</u>	51	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>
+	Sergio Garcia	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	34	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	66	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	66	<u>67</u>
+	Paul Casey	<u>67</u>	51	51	41	51	41	41	41	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	51	41	51	65	51	51	65	<u>67</u>
+	Bubba Watson	51	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	51	41	51	51	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	51	51
+	Marc Leishman	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	41	<u>67</u>	61	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	61	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>
+	Phil Mickelson	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	56	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	49	51	<u>67</u>	49	51

© Oddschecker (all prices shown to decimal odds, dated 01/01/19)



# US Open



**The Venue** - Pebble Beach Golf Links, Pebble Beach, California USA

**The Date** - Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup> 2019

**The Tournament** – Formerly the second, now the third golf Major of the year, the US Open is a prominent feature on both the PGA Tour and the European Tour schedules.

The event is actually under the control of the USGA (United States Golf Association) who treat it very much as the opportunity to “torture” the players with the ultimate test of golf - tight fairways, long and penal rough, treacherous greens. The winner of the US Open is always viewed as a player who really has earned their reward as the conditions can be that difficult.

The tournament was first held in 1895 and since then the roll of honour has been dominated by home players with 84 of 118 champions coming from the US. The remaining 34 winners comprise Scotland (13), England (9), South Africa (5), Australia & Northern Ireland (2), New Zealand, Germany & Argentina (1).



The leading individual winners are all some way back in the record books... Willie Anderson, Bobby Jones, Ben Hogan and Jack Nicklaus (all with 4 wins apiece). Next on the list come Hale Irwin and, more recently, Tiger Woods (each with 3 wins).

The field is typically 156 with the line-up drawn from a much wider catchment than, say, the US Masters as the US Open is "open" to any professional golfer, or amateur, with the necessary handicap who either qualifies or is exempt on account of their status (past champion, world ranking etc).

The unique characteristic of this event is that should there be a play-off after 72 holes, the tied players come back the next day (Monday) and compete over 18 holes.

**The Course** - The US Open is played at a variety of courses, with the tournament so far being hosted in 19 different states.

The 2019 tournament will be staged at Pebble Beach, one of the most iconic courses in the world, let alone the USA. The venue holds the AT&T Pro-Am each year, and has also staged the US PGA Championship (1977) as well as five US Opens (latest 2010).

Pebble Beach will also be celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, with the course, designed by Jack Neville and Douglas Grant, opened in 1919. The 7,040 yard layout can be set-up as a par 71 or 72 (the 2<sup>nd</sup> hole being a par 4/5)... it'll be a par 71 for the US Open!

Tee	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Out
<b>U.S. Open</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>3377</b>
Par	4	4	4	4	3	5	3	4	4	35
Par	4	5	4	4	3	5	3	4	4	36
<b>Blue</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>427</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>3316</b>
<b>Gold</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>3074</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>2888</b>
<b>Red</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>2487</b>
<b>Handicap</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	

10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	In	Total
<b>495</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>3663</b>	<b>7040</b>
4	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	5	36	71
4	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	5	36	72
<b>446</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>3512</b>	<b>6828</b>
<b>429</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>532</b>	<b>3371</b>	<b>6445</b>
<b>409</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>548</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>3228</b>	<b>6116</b>
<b>341</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>458</b>	<b>2762</b>	<b>5249</b>
7	5	17	9	1	13	11	15	3		

## 72-

**Hole Record** - 268, Rory McIlroy (2011)

**18-Hole Record** - 63, Adam Scott (2013)

## Last 10 Winners (and Top 5 places) -

(2018)	Brooks Koepka	(Fleetwood - Johnson - Reed - Finau)
(2017)	Brooks Koepka	(Harman & Matsuyama - Fleetwood - Fowler, Haas)
(2016)	Dustin Johnson	(Furyk, Lowry & Piercy - Garcia & Price)
(2015)	Jordan Spieth	(Johnson & Oosthuizen - Grace, Scott & Smith)
(2014)	Martin Kaymer	(Compton & Fowler - Day, Johnson, Koepka & Stenson)
(2013)	Justin Rose	(Day & Mickelson - Dufner, Els, Horschel & Mahan)
(2012)	Webb Simpson	(McDowell & Thompson - Dufner, Furyk, Harrington & Toms)
(2011)	Rory McIlroy	(Day - Chappell, Garrigus, Westwood & Yang)
(2010)	Graeme McDowell	(Havret - Els - Mickelson & Woods)
(2009)	Lucas Glover	(Barnes, Duval, Mickelson - Fisher)

**Who tends to win the US Open?** - Although each year's tournament is played at a different course, most of the time these venues share key set-up characteristics (and, let's not forget, courses like Pebble Beach in 2018 have been used before).

So despite the US Open being a moveable feast year-on-year it is still possible to isolate a certain type of course, and so a certain type of player, who tends to do well in this particular Major.

The popular view is that Driving Accuracy is the main stat to focus on. And, to a point it is. But of equal relevance, if not more so, is a player hitting Greens-In-Regulation... whether players find the fairway off the tee or not, they need to find the putting surface in regulation (i.e. in 1 shot for a Par 3, two shots for a Par 4, three shots for a Par 5) to give them every chance of making par/birdie.

But arguably more than any other of the four Majors, the US Open tests a player's ability to play "percentage golf", to limit mistakes and to be able to cope with the inevitable high scoring that the course set-up will produce. More than this, previous US Open form is worth checking out, and good solid performances coming into the event are a significant advantage... you will not play yourself into form in this tournament!

**The Betting** - Dustin Johnson 11/1, Tiger Woods 12/1, Jordan Spieth 14/1, Rory McIlroy 16/1, Brooks Koepka 18/1, Justin Thomas 18/1, Justin Rose 18/1, Jason Day 20/1, Rickie Fowler 22/1, Jon Rahm 28/1, Tommy Fleetwood 33/1.

**The Bookies** - the ante-post markets with most firms will present you with a choice of either 5 or 6 EW places. But nearer the tournament you'll see more EW places on offer (up to 8 with some bookmakers) although the odds will tend to be shorter.

## Early "Best Bet" for the US Open - **JASON DAY @ 20/1**



"Over the years the Australian has built up a very solid record in the Major championships... since 2011 he has played in 30, placing inside the Top 10 on 13 occasions and being in the each-way places 8 times.

His best finish in the US Open is a 2nd place in both 2011 and 2013 (he's also been 2nd in the US Masters and the PGA Championship), as well as winning the PGA in 2015.

This remains Day's sole Major championship win to date.

But further success in the Majors would hardly see him win out of turn. As a 12-time winner on the PGA Tour, added to multiple victories all around the world, Day is a regular feature on the leaderboards of blue-riband events.

And because he doesn't attract the attention of a Woods, McIlroy, Spieth or Johnson it's easy to forget that Day won twice on the PGA Tour in 2018 (Farmers Insurance Open & Wells Fargo Championship), and, crucially, he was a runner-up in the AT&T.

In fact, his record here at Pebble Beach has pretty much everything in it bar an outright win... 2-5-11-4-MC-6 in his last six starts in the Pro-Am.

The main issue, and what has surely cost him more career wins throughout his career, has been health and fitness - and well-documented back and shoulder problems remain on the radar.

If he's fit and healthy though, Day is a quality player and proven challenger in the Majors. He's also a long hitter (14th for Driving Distance in 2018), he ranked 1st for Strokes Gained: Putting on the PGA circuit last year and was also inside the Top 20 (19th) for Scrambling... all very useful when tackling the US Open.

It takes a certain temperament to win the US Open, and Day surely has it. The Aussie is more than capable of challenging in any of the year's Majors, but a stellar record here in California makes this tournament his best chance of a second big win."

### **Early Market "Next Best Bet" for the US Open - **WEBB SIMPSON @ 80/1****



"Simpson is a past US Open champion (2012) so straight away you have to consider the claims of the American in this unique, and highly demanding tournament.

Unique and highly demanding in that the course set-up will not suit every player, most players in fact, and so any golfer who shows a liking for such conditions must be considered.

Simpson has made 7 cuts in 8 starts in this Major and besides his 2012 win, he was 14<sup>th</sup> in 2011 and 10<sup>th</sup> in 2018.

Now James Frederick (aka "Webb") isn't the most accurate off the tee, but where he gains on the field is his ability to find Greens-In-Regulation... he regularly features near the top of the charts for Strokes Gained: Tee-To-Green. And a solid putter, he can compete at the highest level.

That lone Major success was followed by a few years away from the limelight, but a victory in the 2018 Players Championship - the otherwise known "5<sup>th</sup> Major" - was a sign that Simpson's game is coming back to him.

He doesn't have a great deal of course form at Pebble Beach, but this is down to a lack of tournament play, rather than a string of missed cuts. His record though in Hawaii points to a player who can handle open, windy courses (likewise a respectable record in the Open Championship).

Experienced, level-headed, a past Major winner and multiple PGA Tour winner, Simpson has all the attributes, on paper, of a contender at the game's biggest events. His price for this one, the US Open, looks the best value of them all."



### The Market – Here's a look at the top of the bookmakers lists for the US Open...

Best Odds <u>Underlined</u> <div><div><div>Odds Shortening</div><div>Odds Drifting</div></div><div>Sort By </div></div>		£	£20	£20	£30		£100	£30	£20	£40	£20	£30		£10		£30		£100	£15	£10	£30
		bet365	sky bet	Ladbrokes	William Hill	MARATHON BET 60+	betfair	BETVICTOR	PADDYPOWER	UNIBET	CORAL	BETFRED	BoyleSports	BLACK TYPE	RED ZONE	betway	BETBRIGHT	10	sportingbet	188 BET	888 sport
		5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/5	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4	5 1/4
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Dustin Johnson	11	<u>12</u>	11	11	<u>12</u>	11	9	11	11	11	11	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Tiger Woods	11	12	11	11	<u>13</u>	12	11	12	11	11	12	10	<u>13</u>	11	<u>13</u>	11	11	11	11	11	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Jordan Spieth	15	15	15	15	<u>15.5</u>	15	12	15	15	15	15	13	15	14.5	15	15	14.5	15	15	15	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Rory McIlroy	17	15	15	15	<u>17.5</u>	15	17	15	15	15	15	15	15	17	15	15	17	15	17	15	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Justin Thomas	17	17	<u>19</u>	17	17	<u>19</u>	17	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>	15	17	16.5	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>	16.5	<u>19</u>	17	<u>19</u>	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Brooks Koepka	15	17	13	15	15	17	17	17	13	13	17	15	<u>19</u>	16	17	17	16	13	15	13	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Justin Rose	19	17	15	17	<u>19.5</u>	17	17	17	15	15	17	17	19	19	17	17	19	15	17	15	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Jason Day	19	<u>21</u>	19	17	<u>21</u>	17	17	17	19	19	19	<u>21</u>	19	18.5	19	19	18.5	19	<u>21</u>	19	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Rickie Fowler	23	21	23	21	<u>24</u>	21	23	21	23	23	23	21	23	23	23	21	23	23	23	23	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Jon Rahm	26	26	21	26	19	23	<u>29</u>	23	21	21	23	21	26	25	26	26	25	21	<u>29</u>	21	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Tommy Fleetwood	34	29	26	26	<u>35</u>	26	29	26	26	26	29	26	26	33	29	29	33	26	34	26	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Henrik Stenson	<u>36</u>	29	29	34	<u>36</u>	29	34	29	29	29	31	26	29	35	29	31	35	29	34	29	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Patrick Reed	34	34	34	34	<u>36</u>	34	34	34	34	34	34	26	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Hideki Matsuyama	36	34	34	34	<u>38</u>	36	34	36	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Bryson Dechambeau	34	34	29	26	35	34	26	34	29	29	29	29	<u>41</u>	34	34	34	34	29	34	29	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Phil Mickelson	36	<u>41</u>	34	34	31	<u>41</u>	34	<u>41</u>	34	34	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	34	36	34	<u>41</u>	36	34	<u>41</u>	34	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Francesco Molinari	41	<u>51</u>	41	41	31	41	<u>51</u>	41	41	41	41	34	<u>51</u>	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Paul Casey	41	<u>51</u>	41	41	<u>51</u>	41	41	41	41	41	41	<u>51</u>	41	39	41	41	39	41	41	41	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Cameron Champ	41	<u>51</u>			41	41		41			36				41				41		
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Bubba Watson	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	41	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Patrick Cantlay	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	51	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	66	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	66	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Marc Leishman	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	56	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Louis Oosthuizen	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>		61	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	41	<u>67</u>	64	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	64	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Tony Finau	34	41	51	34	41	34	51	34	51	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	49	51	41	49	51	<u>67</u>	51	
<div><div></div><div></div></div> Sergio Garcia	56	51	51	51	56	51	<u>67</u>	51	51	51	51	51	51	54	51	51	54	51	51	51	



# Open Championship



**The Venue** - Royal Portrush GC, Portrush, County Antrim, Northern Ireland

**The Date** - Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup> 2019

**The Tournament** - Arguably the most prestigious of the golf Majors (well, it is if you ask anybody from the UK!) but the tradition, drama and extreme conditions of the Open Championship are beyond doubt. It's the oldest of the Majors, having started in 1860 and heading into 2019 there have now been 147 contests to determine the winner of the "Claret Jug" - which is the iconic trophy awarded to each year's winner.

Custom dictates that the tournament is held on a links course - in other words by the sea - and currently the event is staged each year at one of 10 courses which are used in rotation... there are five in Scotland (Troon, Muirfield, Turnberry, Carnoustie and St. Andrews), four in England (Hoylake, Birkdale, Lytham and Sandwich) and one in Northern Ireland (Portrush).

A field of 156 golfers are eligible and they are drawn from players who qualify as of right, due to their world ranking, past successes in Majors, amateur record as well as those golfers who make it through local or regional qualifying contests.

Due to its long history the tournament began in a time when international competition was scarce, so it took from 1860 to 1921 to see the first winner from outside the UK. But now from 147 winners you see the champions coming from USA (44), Scotland (41), England (29), South Africa (10), Australia (9), Northern Ireland & Spain (3), Eire (2) plus Argentina, France, New Zealand, Sweden, Zimbabwe & Italy (1 each).

Leading individual winners Harry Vardon (6), James Braid, John Henry Taylor, Peter Thomson & Tom Watson (5 each).

The tournament is held in the week which includes the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of July and, like all the other Majors, the Open Championship is a four round, 72-hole strokeplay tournament. In the event of a tie, players compete in a 4-hole play-off.

**The Course** - next year's tournament sees a return visit to Royal Portrush, after a break of some 68 years! Last used in 1951, this is a 36-hole facility in Northern Ireland boasting both the Dunluce (Championship) Course and Valley Course.

It has a reputation for being one of the truly great links courses, and founded in 1888 it took on royal patronage in 1895. The Dunluce course was designed by Harry Colt and has several classically featured links holes. But as per all Open Championship venues, bunkers will feature heavily and driving will be key. Players will also need their short game to be in good working order.

"Calamity Corner" - the 16<sup>th</sup> hole, summing up the challenge that faces the players, even without any further troubles that the coastal weather can throw at them.

Hole	Name	Yards	Par	Hole	Name	Yards	Par
1	Hughie's	420	4	10	Himalayas	448	4
2	Giant's Grave	577	5	11	Tavern	473	5/4
3	Islay	176	3	12	Dhu Varren	530	5
4	Fred Daly's	499	4	13	Feather Bed	192	3
5	White Rocks	403	4	14	Causeway	464	4
6	Harry Colt's	191	3	15	Skerries	427	4
7	Curran Point	572	5	16	Calamity Corner	230	3
8	Dunluce	435	4	17	Purgatory	405	4
9	P.G. Stevenson's	430	4	18	Babington's	465	4
Out		3,703	36	In		3,634	36/35
Source:				Total		7,337	72/71

**72-Hole Record** - 268, Rory McIlroy (2011)

**18-Hole Record** - 63, Tommy Fleetwood (2007)



## Last 10 Winners (and Top 5 places) -

(2018)	Francesco Molinari	(Kisner - McIlroy, Rose & Schauffele)
(2017)	Jordan Spieth	(Kuchar - Li - Cabrera-Bello & Garcia)
(2016)	Henrik Stenson	(Mickelson - Holmes - Stricker - Garcia, Hatton & McIlroy)
(2015)	Zach Johnson	(Leishman & Oosthuizen - Day & Spieth)
(2014)	Rory McIlroy	(Fowler & Garcia - Furyk - Leishman & Scott)
(2013)	Phil Mickelson	(Stenson - Poulter, Scott & Westwood)
(2012)	Ernie Els	(Scott - Snedeker & Woods - Donald & McDowell)
(2011)	Darren Clarke	(Mickelson & Johnson - Bjorn - Kim, Fowler & Campbell)
(2010)	Louis Oosthuizen	(Westwood - McIlroy, Stenson & Casey)
(2009)	Stewart Cink	(Watson - Westwood & Wood - Donald, Goosen & Goggin)

## Who tends to win the Open Championship?

Jordan Spieth, the 2017 champion, famously described the Open as the “easiest” of the four Majors to win. But that’s not quite the same as saying anybody can take home the Claret Jug. What the American meant was that if you get the right draw (in terms of the weather) then your chances of success are massively boosted... so regardless of ability, the first thing to check when assessing a player’s chances at Portrush isn’t their past record or current form... it’s the weather and their tee-time!

But aside from this players need the ability to handle poor weather - as the wind can blow, and the rain might fall, all day... or all week. Also delays can occur, and then it’s a case of staying focused and not letting any break in play affect your round.

What is worth checking out is a player’s record in past Majors, and on links-style courses both in the UK and around the world. Key attributes are the ability to shape shots in the wind, scramble around the greens, and plot your way around the course.

Open Championships are rarely birdie-fests and don’t tend to be won by typical US players, not used to adverse conditions, undulating fairways and quirky greens, or for that matter “target golfers” from anywhere else around the world. It’s more about players who can adapt their game to suit the conditions.

**The Betting** - Rory McIlroy 12/1, Tiger Woods 14/1, Dustin Johnson 14/1, Justin Rose 16/1, Jordan Spieth 18/1, Rickie Fowler 20/1, Brooks Koepka 22/1, Jon Rahm 25/1, Tommy Fleetwood 25/1, Justin Thomas 28/1, Francesco Molinari 33/1.

**The Bookies** - the ante-post markets with most firms will present you with a choice of either 5 or 6 EW places. But nearer the tournament you’ll see more EW places on offer (up to 8 with some bookmakers) although the odds will tend to be shorter.

## Early “Best Bet” for the Open Championship - **SERGIO GARCIA @ 33/1**



“The Spaniard finally got the monkey off his back with a win at the US Masters in 2017. That was his 74<sup>th</sup> Major, during which time he had posted no less than 22 Top 10 finishes (including being a runner-up 3 times).

So it’s fair to say that Sergio really earned that win!

But all through his career, it’s the Open that has time-and-again given him the best chance of Major success.

In 22 starts in this tournament Garcia has posted a Top 10 on no fewer than 10 separate occasions, and missed the cut just three times since 2000.

So without doubt Garcia is a proven performer in links conditions, can certainly handle being in-contention and now with the pressure off, in terms of winning a Major, he's better suited than ever to lift the Claret Jug.

Now the quotes of 33/1 for someone who clearly looks a shoo-in for this tournament may seem odd... but Garcia missed the cut at all four majors in 2018, and generally struggled for form during much of the year.

But he's too good a player to write-off and with the boost of a Ryder Cup win late in 2018 (when Garcia won three out of four matches) and now married with a daughter there's every reason to believe there's still plenty of golf left in someone who, at 39, is by no means a spent force. In this tournament, 33's has to be too big for a player with his impressive, and consistent, record when it comes to Open golf."

### **Early Market "Next Best Bet" for the Open Championship - **MARC LEISHMAN** @ 50/1**



"Without doubt the Australian has the pedigree to land a Major title...

He's a multiple winner on the PGA Tour (4 times), this also includes one FedEx Cup event (BMW Championship), added to other career wins in South Africa, Malaysia and his native Australia.

He also has multiple, standout Top 10 finishes in two Majors - the US Masters (4<sup>th</sup> in 2013 and 9<sup>th</sup> in 2018) and here at the Open Championship...

Leishman's recent Open record is very impressive, he was 5<sup>th</sup> at Hoylake in 2014, followed that up with 2<sup>nd</sup> place at St. Andrews in 2015 and was again in the hunt for the Claret Jug with a 6<sup>th</sup> place finish at Birkdale in 2017.

And there's no doubting the fact that players from Down Under do well in the Open as their formative years are often spent on courses which share many characteristics with Open-style venues... open and "exposed" layouts, ones where the elements (notably the wind plays a part) and fairways often require deft skills and the ability to "bump and run" shots around the greens.

Leishman has a strong all-round game which looks a good fit for the demands of this event... he ranks highly in Strokes Gained: Around The Green, is Top 50 for Scrambling and what he lacks for accuracy off the tee, he makes up for in distance.

Aged in his mid-30s is another tick in the box of a profile that has few weaknesses.

All in all, the Open Championship is a tournament that demands patience, nerve, experience, not to mention ability, and Leishman has them all.

At 50/1 he's decent EW value in an event where he has already shown (on multiple occasions) an ability to compete with the world's best. And in what will be a very open betting heat, on a track with little/no course form, Leishman is a clear value pick."



## The Market – Here's a look at the top of the market for the Open Championship...

Best Odds Underlined

 Odds Shortening

 Odds Drifting

Sort By 

	£	£20	£20	£30		£100	£30	£20	£40	£20	£30		£10	£30		£100	£15	£10	£30	£20
	bet365	sky bet	Ladbrokes	William Hill	MARATHON	betfair	BETVICTOR	PADDYPOWER	UNIBET	CORAL	BETFRED	BoyleSports	BLACK TYPE	betway	BETBRIGHT	10	sportingbet	188 BET	888 sport	SportPesa
	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4	6/5	5/4	6/5	5/4	5/4	5/4	6/5	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4	5/4
+ Rory McIlroy	11	11	13	13	<u>13.5</u>	13	13	13	13	13	13	11	12	12	13	11	11	13	13	11
+ Tiger Woods	11	13	13	13	13.5	13	<u>15</u>	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	11	13	13
+ Dustin Johnson	15	15	13	13	<u>15.5</u>	13	13	13	15	13	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
+ Justin Rose	<u>17</u>	15	15	15	15	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	15	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	15	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>17</u>
+ Jordan Spieth	17	<u>19</u>	17	15	17.5	15	13	15	13	17	17	17	15	15	17	15	15	15	13	15
+ Rickie Fowler	19	19	17	17	19	<u>21</u>	17	<u>21</u>	<u>21</u>	17	19	17	19	17	19	19	19	19	<u>21</u>	19
+ Brooks Koepka	19	21	17	17	17	19	21	19	16	17	17	17	<u>23</u>	21	19	21	21	17	16	21
+ Jon Rahm	23	19	21	21	23	<u>26</u>	21	<u>26</u>	21	21	23	17	23	21	21	23	23	23	21	23
+ Tommy Fleetwood	23	21	<u>26</u>	17	21	23	17	23	<u>26</u>	<u>26</u>	21	19	23	23	23	23	23	23	<u>26</u>	23
+ Justin Thomas	23	23	26	26	23	26	26	26	23	26	26	26	<u>29</u>	26	26	23	23	26	23	23
+ Francesco Molinari	26	23	26	26	26	26	<u>34</u>	26	26	26	23	21	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
+ Henrik Stenson	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	26	29	26	29	<u>34</u>	29	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>34</u>	29	<u>34</u>
+ Sergio Garcia	34	29	34	34	<u>35</u>	34	26	34	34	34	31	29	34	29	34	34	34	34	34	34
+ Jason Day	34	34	34	26	<u>36</u>	23	26	23	26	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	26	34
+ Alex Noren	<u>41</u>	29	<u>41</u>	34	31	36	34	36	34	<u>41</u>	34	<u>41</u>	29	29	34	<u>41</u>	<u>41</u>	34	34	<u>41</u>
+ Hideki Matsuyama	36	34	34	34	<u>41</u>	36	<u>41</u>	36	34	34	36	<u>41</u>	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
+ Paul Casey	41	41	41	41	<u>43</u>	41	41	41	34	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	34	41
+ Bryson DeChambeau	41	41	<u>51</u>	34	36	41	<u>51</u>	41	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	41	41	<u>51</u>	41	<u>51</u>	41	41	<u>51</u>	<u>51</u>	41
+ Branden Grace	51	51	51		<u>53</u>	51	41	51	41	51	41	41	51	51	51	51	51	51	41	51
+ Marc Leishman	51	51	51	51	<u>53</u>	51	41	51	41	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	41	51
+ Patrick Reed	<u>61</u>	51	51	41	51	34	29	34	41	51	41	41	51	41	51	<u>61</u>	<u>61</u>	51	41	<u>61</u>
+ Matt Kuchar	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	56	<u>67</u>	41	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>
+ Tony Finau	41	51	<u>67</u>	51	61	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	<u>67</u>	41	51	51	<u>67</u>	51	56	56	51	<u>67</u>	56
+ Tyrrell Hatton	56	51	51	51	51	<u>67</u>	51	<u>67</u>	51	51	41	41	51	51	51	56	56	51	51	56
+ Joaquin Niemann	51	67	67		<u>71</u>	51	51	51	67	67	67	51	67	51	67	51	51	51	67	51

© Oddschecker (all prices shown to decimal odds, dated 01/01/19)

## Section 4: PGA Tour schedule 2018-19

01/10/2018	Safeway Open	California
14/10/2018	CIMB Classic	Malaysia
21/10/2018	CJ Cup	South Korea
28/10/2018	WGC-HSBC Champions	China
28/10/2018	Sanderson Farms Championship	Mississippi
04/11/2018	Shriners Hospitals for Children Open	Nevada
11/11/2018	Mayakoba Golf Classic	Mexico
18/11/2018	RSM Classic	Georgia
06/01/2019	Sentry Tournament of Champions	Hawaii
13/01/2019	Sony Open in Hawaii	Hawaii
20/01/2019	Desert Classic	California
27/01/2019	Farmers Insurance Open	California
03/02/2019	Waste Management Phoenix Open	Arizona
10/02/2019	AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am	California
17/02/2019	Genesis Open	California
24/02/2019	WGC-Mexico Championship	Mexico
24/02/2019	Puerto Rico Open	Puerto Rico
03/03/2019	The Honda Classic	Florida
10/03/2019	Arnold Palmer Invitational	Florida
17/03/2019	The Players Championship	Florida
24/03/2019	Valspar Championship	Florida
31/03/2019	WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play	Texas
31/03/2019	Puntacana Club Championship	Dom Republic
07/04/2019	Valero Texas Open	Texas
14/04/2019	<b>US Masters</b>	Georgia
21/04/2019	RBC Heritage	South Carolina
28/04/2019	Zurich Classic of New Orleans	Louisiana
05/05/2019	Wells Fargo Championship	North Carolina
12/05/2019	AT&T Byron Nelson	Texas
19/05/2019	<b>US PGA Championship</b>	New York

26/05/2019	Charles Schwab Challenge	Texas
02/06/2019	The Memorial Tournament	Ohio
09/06/2019	RBC Canadian Open	Ontario
16/06/2019	<b>US Open</b>	California
23/06/2019	Travelers Championship	Connecticut
30/06/2019	Rocket Mortgage Classic	Michigan
07/07/2019	3M Open	Minnesota
14/07/2019	John Deere Classic	Illinois
21/07/2019	<b>The Open Championship</b>	N.Ireland
21/07/2019	Barbasol Championship	Kentucky
28/07/2019	WGC-FedEx St. Jude Invitational	Tennessee
28/07/2019	Reno-Tahoe Tournament	Nevada
04/08/2019	Wyndham Championship	North Carolina
11/08/2019	The Northern Trust	New Jersey
18/08/2019	BMW Championship	Illinois
25/08/2019	Tour Championship	Georgia

Tournaments will continue from week commencing September 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 right through to December 2019 and then into 2020... but as these form part of the 2019/20 PGA Tour the exact details at time of writing are still to be finalised.

## Section 5: European PGA Tour schedule 2018-19

25/11/2018	Hong Kong Open	Hong Kong
02/12/2018	Australian PGA Championship	Australia
02/12/2018	Mauritius Open	Mauritius
09/12/2018	South African Open	South Africa
16/12/2018	Alfred Dunhill Championship	South Africa
19/01/2019	Abu Dhabi HSBC Championship	UAE
27/01/2019	Omega Dubai Desert Classic	UAE
03/02/2019	Saudi International	Saudi Arabia
10/02/2019	ISPS Handa Victoria Open	Australia
17/02/2019	ISPS Handa World Super 6 Perth	Australia
24/02/2019	WGC-Mexico Championship	Mexico
03/03/2019	Oman Open	Oman
10/03/2019	Qatar Masters	Qatar
17/03/2019	Kenya Open	Kenya
24/03/2019	Maybank Championship	Malaysia
31/03/2019	WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play	United States
31/03/2019	Hero Indian Open	India
14/04/2019	<b>US Masters</b>	United States
28/04/2019	Trophée Hassan II	Morocco
05/05/2019	Volvo China Open	China
12/05/2019	British Masters	England
19/05/2019	<b>US PGA Championship</b>	United States
26/05/2019	Made in Denmark	Denmark
02/06/2019	Belgian Knockout	Belgium
16/06/2019	<b>US Open</b>	United States
23/06/2019	BMW International Open	Germany
30/06/2019	Andalucía Valderrama Masters	Spain
07/07/2019	Dubai Duty Free Irish Open	Ireland
14/07/2019	Scottish Open	Scotland
21/07/2019	<b>The Open Championship</b>	Northern Ireland

28/07/2019	WGC-FedEx St. Jude Invitational	United States
04/08/2019	TBA	TBA
11/08/2019	Shot Clock Challenge	TBA
18/08/2019	D+D Real Czech Masters	Czech Republic
25/08/2019	Scandinavian Invitation	Sweden
01/09/2019	Omega European Masters	Switzerland
08/09/2019	Porsche European Open	Germany
15/09/2019	KLM Open	Netherlands
22/09/2019	BMW PGA Championship	England
29/09/2019	Alfred Dunhill Links Championship	Scotland
06/10/2019	Open de España	Spain
13/10/2019	Italian Open	Italy
20/10/2019	Open de France	France
27/10/2019	Portugal Masters	Portugal
03/11/2019	WGC-HSBC Champions	China
10/11/2019	Turkish Airlines Open	Turkey
17/11/2019	Nedbank Golf Challenge	South Africa
24/11/2019	DP World Tour Championship, Dubai	UAE

Tournaments will continue from the week commencing December 1<sup>st</sup> 2019 going through to 2020... but as these form part of the 2019/20 European Tour schedule and the exact details at time of writing are still to be finalised.

## Section 6: Golf industry insider Q&A's

A series of interviews held with four leading professionals in and around the betting industry, all of whom are involved with golf and golf betting.

They were each asked a number of questions, and their answers are included in this section.

**Interview No.1** – this was with "Mike" a 20 year veteran of the corporate betting world, a specialist on a number of sports with a financial background who is currently based in Africa.

**Q: From what you know, how would you rate betting on golf compared to other sports like horseracing, football or tennis?**

**A:** Golf is unique in that the field contains 150-odd runners, whereas a football or tennis match has just two, and a horse race ten or fifteen. This makes analysis and comparison of the golf runners merits exponentially more difficult and time-consuming.

The upside is that a golf win or a place pays on average much more. So with the right strategy and information you can win very big amounts. Also because of the nature of golf tournaments, trading opportunities exist over a far longer time frame (up to 4 days).

**Q: In general terms, on a scale of 1-10, how clued-up do you think the bookies are when it comes to pricing up golf markets?**

**A:** I think 2-3 bookmakers, notably *Bet365* & *Skybet*, rate highly (8) in terms of being clued-up with their pricing. My perception is that most bookmakers won't even open their golf betting until they've seen the opening prices of at least one bookmaker they respect, and they set their prices accordingly.

This leads to a high level of uniformity across golf betting markets, with very little evidence of individual bookmaker opinion or expertise feeding into available prices.

The major punter benefit of this "copy & paste" scenario is that if the leader gets his prices wrong, those errors are dutifully copied by almost all others!

**Q: Which markets should punters focus on in terms of (a) value and (b) making money? And which ones to avoid..?**

**A:** A few things to say here...

(i) There can be no "value" unless you firstly, and independently, get an intelligently justified price then compare it with the bookmaker's odds.



(ii) In my opinion, some of the greatest price value in golf exists in tournament Top 10 and Top 20 betting because bookmakers almost exclusively derive these prices from each player's *Tournament Winner* prices.

This is flawed logic as it assumes their win price is correct AND a player's chances of placing Top 10 are a standard 7% or so of his chances of winning. There are many players who are priced at 50/1 or 66/1 each week who will never win but who do place, regularly.

(iii) The main area to avoid is player head-to-heads and groups, especially over shorter distances such as 18 holes, as any golfer can shoot 65 or 75 on the same course on any given day. The other reason for avoiding them is the relatively high percentage bookmakers bet on such markets.

**Q: What tournaments are the best to bet on and why... Majors, WGC, European or PGA Tour or even Seniors, LPGA and the Web.com Tour?**

**A:** The best tournaments to bet on fall into three categories...

(i) Those with fully disclosed top-level form plus quality fields (this excludes WGC's & Majors which I class as separate due to their unique features) so regular European and US PGA & Web.Com Tour events, for me, are the best.

(ii) Women's tournaments, where there is a lower level of bookmaker expertise and duty of care in price assessment (e.g. LPGA, LET)

(iii) Fields where players from 2-3 different Tours are united in a field, such as co-sanctioned or tri-sanctioned events. This makes price assessment more problematical (e.g. Asian-Japan, Sunshine-European, PGA-Asian etc).

**Q: Finally, one nugget of general advice you could give the average punter to improve their betting... any so-called "tricks of the trade".**

**A:** Unless you're a purely recreational punter, always have prices in mind for a player at which you're prepared to bet, and below which you won't bet. If you're serious, a bit of research and analysis will help your betting focus massively.

With its large fields, you need a little bit of luck in golf betting. However, one of my favourite adages is, "*Luck is where preparation meets opportunity*".

So, do your preparation, then seek your opportunities... you'll get lucky more often!

**Interview No.2** – “Rex” is based Down Under in Australia. An ex-pat, he brings many years experience to the table when it comes to the bookmaking industry, and golf betting in particular.

**Q: From what you know, how would you rate betting on golf compared to other sports like horse racing, football or tennis?**

**A:** There is now a more concentrated impetus for bookmakers to expand their golf product, but it is still vastly below where it used to be in the spectrum of betting.

Partly that is down to the product (and a 4-day wait for a pay out) but it has been overtaken by the in-play betting of sports such as football and tennis.

So the very nature of the sport, despite bookmakers trying to offer more round-by-round markets and even hole-by-hole betting, means it is now a minority sport whereas 10 years ago in terms of turnover it was only behind football and horse racing.

The main bookmakers who basically frame the market are *bet365* and *Skybet*. When they first produce their prices at the start of the week, they are pretty close to the starting prices. Bookmakers with unreliable internal acumen now just copy and paste these prices with a few tweaks here and there to not totally plagiarise the product, but still the prices available are now very homogenised.

There is little disparity between firms, and if there ever is, that price differential will not last long. Golf compilers are now instructed to not be too opinionated, most firms now have separate traders to trade the markets, as they are not so precious about the prices to hold them too long.

Accounts are now flagged up earlier than they used to be... so the secret to making a profit is to move quickly and hold multiple accounts, and if necessary throw in a few novelty bets on other sports to muddle the profiling of your account.

**Q: In general terms, on a scale of 1-10, how clued-up do you think the bookies are when it comes to pricing up golf markets?**

**A:** I would say around 8 to 9 out of ten - that is *Bet365* or *Skybet*. The others don't price independently, and firms like *Paddy Power* when they are first up on a market usually have framed it wrong.

It's very hard to assess the rest as they don't actually compile any event from scratch so to rate their intellectual capacity is difficult.

**Q: Which markets should punters focus on in terms of (a) value and (b) making money? And which ones to avoid..?**

**A:** The *Top 20* market is possibly the way to go, as they are generally compiled solely by the *Tournament Winner* price and not the historical average of *Top 20* positions.

*3-Balls* are pretty much bet close to 100%, especially when the same *3-Balls* are framed for Round 2, and generally bookmakers are happy to take money on them, as the amount of multiple bets cover for the occasional losses on specific *3-Balls*. Bookmakers also won't profile you as much as the prices you are backing are short.

*72-hole* match bets I would steer wide of them unless there is a "no tie" option, but sometimes course compatibility, or lack of, or injury or weather news can make these viable.

The *Tournament Winner* market of course, if it's price relative, is still the best-case scenario, but chasing players after the price has gone is one way to the poor house.

**Q: What tournaments are the best to bet on and why... Majors, WGC, European or PGA Tour or even Seniors, LPGA and the Web.com Tour?**

**A:** I would say Majors, solely due to the solidity of the market. You can get on to large stakes, and the percentage these events are bet to is the least each year.

Place offers on these events, can almost be over generous, *Skybet* bet 1/4 odds, places 1-8 in the *US Masters*, to 125%, over broke on the place part. High Street bookmakers like *Ladbrokes*, *William Hill* push their prices out to best price to try and gain business.

*The Open* despite the attractive price and place offers has been recently effected greatly by the draw with a 10 hour window difference between 1st and last tee off for the first two days, it is prone to be heavily weighted in favour of one side. Other Majors are more like 6 hours so the draw isn't effected enough.

Courses with no previous form being used for the first time should be avoided, the set-up suitability of these courses are unknown factors, and unless a price sticks out should be swerved.

Minor events should really be profitable but lazy pricing by most firms bar *Skybet* and *Bet365* means there is little variance in pricing and value. So diligence and your own study might uncover some nuggets.

**Q: Finally, one nugget of general advice you could give the average punter to improve their betting... any so-called "tricks of the trade".**

**A:** A few.

I would be wary to bet a long way advance in any Major especially at, say, under 50/1. I would recommend to wait till the week of the event, and even the Tuesday or Wednesday of the week, that is when prices will be their most competitive, place offers most generous and limits at their most. You also may get Money Back offers, if certain players win the event etc.

I would try and get an account with *Pinnacle* [who I believe are soon to return to the UK market], withdrawing money can be a bit tiresome, but for betting on *72-hole* match bets, *3-Balls* and *18-hole* match-ups, they bet these to around 102-103%, and are based on Las Vegas lines, which I think are too opinionated and differ a lot from UK market. They also don't shut winning accounts they encourage them.

*Betfair*, I'm a bit loathe to tip them up here, but the facility to maximise your profitability, even on losing bets, must be followed. Cash-out facilities from other bookmakers are not generous, if you ever consider doing this, you'll get better odds on the exchanges.

*Top 20* odds, as mentioned before can be profitable. Firms like *Stan James* (now *Unibet*) are very opinionated on these markets... one I recall was *Anthony Wall* in the *Joburg Open*. He was 9/4 with *Stan James* and 5/4 with other bookmakers and the price stayed till tee-off.

Compilers factorise in *Top 10* and *Top 20* prices from the *Tournament Winner* odds, they don't factorise in *Top 10* and *Top 20* stats. There is no real *Betfair* market so no arbiters are around to signify pricing errors, as all the traders, will be looking at the *Tournament Winner* market.

Discipline being most important... you won't win if you're lazy.

Every bet should have a minimum price you will take, and say if you fancy *Charl Schwartzel* for the *Alfred Dunhill* if you make him a 4/1 shot and you fancy him for your life, if 10/3 is the best price out there, don't back it... ignore it save your money for the next bet you are happy to back at that right price.

**Interview No.3** – “Mark” is a Head Trader here in the UK. Another who brings plenty of experience and insight with him after a number of years spent in various roles in the betting industry.

**Q: From what you know, how would you rate betting on golf compared to other sports like horseracing, football or tennis?**

**A:** Having only ever focused on golf betting, it is difficult for me to put it in a scale with other sports in terms of % chance of consistently making a decent profit. Golf certainly does repeatedly provide us with huge priced winners.

Four of the last five winners on the PGA Tour were 100/1+ (*Gribble, Sampling, Perez, Hughes*). A 100/1 horse winning is headline news, which suggests golf is certainly worth studying closely.

With each of these four winners on the PGA there were playing patterns and form lines to suggest they had a very good chance of playing well. The size of the field simply dictates that over 50% of most players will be 100/1+.

As with all sports, consistently beating the bookie with price or making a steady profit enhances the chances of limits or restrictions being implemented.

**Q: In general terms, on a scale of 1-10, how clued-up do you think the bookies are when it comes to pricing up golf markets?**

**A:** I'd say 7/10. The main golf compilers are very strong on the main golf tours and unfortunately a lot of firms these days simply copy them as opposed to employing their own compiler.

Tools such as *Betfair Exchange* and *Oddschecker* also reduce the likelihood of a golfer's chances being drastically miscalculated. However, their knowledge and expertise certainly diminishes on the lesser golf tours.

**Q: Which markets should punters focus on in terms of (a) value and (b) making money? And which ones to avoid..?**

**A:** Generally I would encourage punters to think outside of the box.

Are there any angles they can utilise that may have been missed? Look at details such as putting and grass types. For markets such as *Round 1 Leader* look at the weather. It's absolutely crucial yet the market is released on Mondays.

*Tournament Winner (pre-tournament)* - Monday is the best day in terms of attractive betting opportunities. By Tuesday all firms' prices will be pretty much aligned. If a significant piece of information e.g. home course is not being used, then it needs to be jumped on.

*Tournament Winner (in-play)* - Should be worth a look for any serious golf punter. Unlike pre-tournament the price disparities can be huge. Quite a number of firms have

out-sourced golf in-play to the same provider. Quite clearly they are receiving crucial scoring information before it is generally available so 100% avoid betting with them.

*Top 10/20* - Prices usually derived from the outright price. Whilst a good indicator, this often produces some anomalies that we can profit from. There are many players who despite never contending for victory, regularly place well up the leaderboard.

*72 Match Bets* - A market where a lot of bookmakers get lazy and simply pair up two golfers who are the same price in the outright. Research here and we can consistently win money. In fact these markets are no longer provided by some firms.

*2/3 Balls* - Should be treated with caution, Round 1 generally. Round 2 prices can certainly provide huge value. Focus on the scores shot by players, differences often huge. One firm actually just replicates Round 1 prices - clearly providing value.

*Top Nationalities* - simple maths here indicates the margins for the bookmakers are huge. Often 30%+ for a market with 7-15 players. Should be avoided.

**Q: What tournaments are the best to bet on and why... Majors, WGC, European or PGA Tour or even Seniors, LPGA and the Web.com Tour?**

**A:** Majors are used as loss leaders by many firms and unlike most weeks the punters certainly have the edge.

A smaller field at the *US Masters* combined with 20 players who simply cannot win (past winners, *Sandy Lyle etc...*) yet each way Top 5 is still offered. The other majors and the 6/7/8 place terms on offer should be utilised. Fantastic each way value.

*Champions Tour* - similar to above in that bookmakers bet broke every week on this. I would encourage any serious golf bettor to study this.

*Web.com/Challenge Tour* - as suggested, with compiling less strong here great betting opportunities can arise. No liquidity on exchanges dictates these prices will last longer.

*LPGA Tour* - less attractive as the best players are very dominant.

**Q: Finally, one nugget of general advice you could give the average punter to improve their betting... any so-called "tricks of the trade".**

**A:** Spread golf bets across all firms and take the best possible price on offer. This will make a significant difference to long term profit and loss.

Use any spare time to study the sport. There are no short cuts but rewards can be great.



**Interview No.4** – this is "Eoin" an Irish-based trader and odds compiler.  
A profitable backer and another player right at the heart of the  
bookmaking industry.

**Q: From what you know, how would you rate betting on golf compared to other sports like horseracing, football or tennis?**

**A:** For those interested in earning some extra income from betting, golf certainly has a few advantages. For example...

The market is a lot harder to move than horse racing, and thus those infamous red flags may take longer to appear to those profiling your account.

And although value can be harder to come by for some *Tournament Winner* bets, it's easier to come by in some derivative markets such as *Top Nationality* and *2/3-Ball* bets.

**Q: In general terms, on a scale of 1-10, how clued-up do you think the bookies are when it comes to pricing up golf markets?**

**A:** In my view, the ability of golf traders is currently at a low point. A 3 or a 4/10.

The number of strange trading decisions I see weekly now is growing and growing. Even if I wasn't a "golf nerd" I would be seeking to obtain the value on offer in a sport where many firms follow some bigger market leaders. It is certainly the case of follow the leader for many.

**Q: Which markets should punters focus on in terms of (a) value and (b) making money? And which ones to avoid..?**

**A:** The *Tournament Winner* market has always been my bread-and-butter but I wouldn't advise anyone to go into it blindly.

It is a huge market every week, full of plenty of variables and the amount of work that needs to go into forming a strong opinion is time-consuming and often takes a long time to reap rewards. But it does hold the biggest opportunities to make big money.

*2/3 Ball* bets come a close second. The same pairings almost always go out on a Friday after Thursday's first round. This means that pre-tournament prices must be re-assessed after Round 1 scores and this results in a wide array of prices across the various firms. This always presents opportunities.

I would avoid getting on "value" in-running on the *Tournament Winner* market. This can result in your account being limited quite quickly.

There is nothing more irritating for a golf trader to see somebody pick-pocketing... so don't expect your account to last a long time when you're sitting at your laptop peering through your balaclava!

**Q: What tournaments are the best to bet on and why... Majors, WGC, European or PGA Tour or even Seniors, LPGA and the Web.com Tour?**

**A:** The bigger the tournament, the better for me.

Mainly because we know the top players are trying their damndest to win. I do believe many turn up to run-of-the-mill events with little desire to win.

Course form is important but personally I relish an event at a new course as a fair bit of research gives me the opportunity to get ahead of the odds compilers.

As senior events become more populated by the big names in golf from the past twenty years this also represents opportunities for the punter. Odds compilers are less confident in their pricing of these events after one or two days therefore there will be some price ricks.

**Q: Finally, one nugget of general advice you could give the average punter to improve their betting... any so-called "tricks of the trade".**

**A:** I would advise anyone not to back any clear errors e.g. 100/1 about a 10/1 poke. There is little point. You won't get paid and your account will be flagged. Instead tackle the bookmaker head on. Only get involved when you believe you have an edge.

Throwing in some rogue bets (football accas, horse multiples) will be music to bookmakers ears. If you can afford to throw some of those bets into your account it will do you no harm at all.

Being very selective over the long-term is another trait bookmakers don't like.

But most of all, don't moan when you are restricted....it shows you are on the right path!

## Section 7. In-depth Q&A with the Golf Insider (updated January 2019)

It's just before 10am on a nothing sort of day in late Autumn. It's wet outside. London is starting to get on with its daily business.

As for me, this is my view...



I'm sat in the lobby of a premier-listed hotel owned by a leading chain... waiting.

And I do a lot of waiting in my line of work. Sat in coffee shops, sat in hotels, sat in restaurants.

[I shudder to think how many hours I've spent over the past 25 years that I've been in this business, sat, waiting for people.]

But it's generally worth my while as I'm there to meet interesting people, useful people. People who can help me, and you, win money.

Now the man I'm here to meet today I've met several times before, first back in June 2014. And since then he's become a highly-prized contact and very much the driving force behind a service that time and again has proven to be a thorn-in-the-side of the bookies.

Sometimes the very same bookies he himself works for!!

Because I'm waiting this morning to see the Golf Insider. A man who I first recruited back in the Summer of 2014, when he was based in London working for one of the several start-up betting operations that appeared on the scene at the time...

And he's a man who I've followed through his subsequent career moves, onwards and upwards, both at home in the UK and abroad, to his current position where he now commands a senior post in the industry, creating odds that you and I regularly refer to, and analyse.

But he remains very much “my man”.

I have a hotline to him, keeping in touch constantly by phone, email, Skype and WhatsApp... to receive his own personal assessment of each week’s golfing action and, more importantly, details of his own personal bets.

And over the years we’ve been collaborating, this working relationship has been an extremely lucrative one for both parties - for the Insider himself, as well as members of the private betting service that he helps to run.

Now I value his judgement very highly. He’s a still relatively young man, in his late 30’s, compared to some of the dinosaurs who dominate the betting landscape, but his state-of-the-art approach to golf betting, and the methodology around the selection and placement of his bets, is second-to-none.

Driven by his own knowledge of the sport, and his contacts within the professional game, but fundamentally underpinned by his own, bespoke model (aka his “value machine”) that uses a complex set of inter-related algorithms to accurately predict the chances, and so correct value odds, of each player in the field... this is what sets him apart from the other tipsters I have come across with regards to this sport.

Because golf is a fantastic sport to bet on. One that affords backers the chance to profit from genuine winners-of-a-lifetime.

Serving up big-priced successes at 80/1, 125/1, 66/1, 50/1, 70/1... all of which have been given to members by the Insider over the years. Plus many, many more winners besides.

And when armed with the right information, that targets the “blindspots” the bookies have when it comes to the golf markets - as you’ll see when you read on - it really is like betting kryptonite.

So having first met with the Insider back in June 2014, and having spoken to him many times since, and then finally sitting down to do an in-depth Q&A with him in late 2017... it was now time to meet-up again and update the story.

Understanding how and why he bets, what he seeks out and what he disregards, the way in which he treats success and failure, and why, ultimately, he makes a tidy living at golf betting (aside from his 9-to-5 day job in the trading room)... this is all part of realising just how good he is at what he does, and why as someone who likes to bet on golf - or should be if you aren’t already - you need to get on this information.

Now we talked on this occasion for two, maybe two and a half hours, and through this conversation, which was much more than a simple interrogation, I teased out of him the thoughts, opinions and ideas he has about golf betting, and betting in general.

Starting at the beginning, and plotting our way through his career in the business, it proved an interesting discussion. I got to know several new things about him and learned a whole lot more about the way his betting has developed over the years.

Read on and you’ll get an understanding of why I value him so highly and if you’re not already betting with him... then you should be.

So like any good story, I started right at the beginning by asking him where it all began...

**Q: Can you tell me a little about your background, and what brought you to betting in the first place?**

**A:** Betting happened quite by chance, really. You read stories about professional gamblers growing up in a betting environment, with a father or favourite uncle who liked a punt, or those who backed the winner of the Derby as a schoolboy... but this wasn't me.

I grew up in the South of England, went to a decent school, followed that by going straight to university. I got a degree, like all my friends did at the time, and could easily have gone into any sort of run-of-the-mill, regular profession after that.

For sure, sport was always an interest. Playing it, watching it... but betting wasn't.

I guess I might have ended up in something like a bank, as I was always pretty good with numbers, and my degree was in this area... but, no, I can't say betting was on the radar at the time.

This came along maybe 12 months afterwards, on the back of several failed interviews for all sorts of jobs, and a bit of temping...

Anyway, a mate of mine from university had a friend who worked for a leading bookmaker, and through him I got to hear about a job opportunity.

I started working for this particular firm back in 2002, it would have been. Yes, November time [*specific details of names and dates I have to keep confidential, you understand, to maintain the Insider's privacy with regards to his current position*].

I liked it... the type of work suited my interests. And I got to work on various desks, getting exposure to a number of different sports. It was good fun. As a young guy, who liked sport, with no family, it's a great working environment to be in.

I moved from that firm a couple of years later, to another bookmaker... but there I found the career ladder led to a series of dead-ends (positions taken by guys who were going nowhere anytime soon), so I went to another firm, which also offered me the chance to work overseas.

I did that for a while, then came back to the UK, to work for a smaller firm, but at a higher grade. They subsequently got taken over. So I moved again, but because of my previous position I now got a more senior role.

So the process hasn't been in one straight line, but it's always been a step forwards, I think. And I've been lucky. I've not been out of work at any stage, and I've managed to join the right firm at pretty much the right time.

I've now been in the business for a number of years. It's the only job I've ever done, full-time, and it's what I do day-in, day-out.

**Q: And why end up with golf betting? Why not horseracing or football or any other sport?**

**A:** Well, my dad's a big golfer, a single-figure handicapper, and I've played it from an early age, and always had an interest in watching it.

And then in work, it was the sport that I liked working on the best. It didn't have the daily churn of racing, and it offered better value markets than, say, football. And other sports attracted so little money they just didn't excite me at all.

Also golf was a sport that internally had much less competition. So, ok, there were less jobs going, which is why I've moved around a bit, but when open, there are less people capable of doing them well.

And then, when given the chance, I'd run good books on the tournaments that came up.

So gradually I got more and more settled in this area and now I wouldn't leave for almost any other position. None that immediately springs to mind anyway.

**Q: And your own personal betting, did this begin as soon as you started work?**

**A:** No, not at first. I was a bit more circumspect than some of the guys I've worked with, who seemed hell-bent on losing their wages before they'd even earned them!

I guess this goes back to my familiarity with numbers. I understood from the outset about the importance of betting with your head and not your heart. And then you see the clients, how they bet, and you learn from them. Those that bet shrewdly, and patiently, and win. Those who bet with less control... or none at all!

And then the more senior I got, and as the industry moved on a bit, the more familiar I got with the quant side of things. Using models and algorithms... and once this started, and I could see the results, I began to bet more seriously myself. Small at first, but it's grown ever since.

**Q: So how much do you bet now on a tournament, or each week?**

**A:** Across all markets... hundreds. Maybe into the thousands. It all depends on what's available value-wise and the strength of the market. I bet on a fair number of markets, not all of which we use on the service [*the reason for this is to control the volume of bets*], so my outlay gets spread quite wide.

I know you've asked me before if I could stop work and bet full-time for a living just on golf. And the answer is yes. But I like the job, and working in the industry keeps me informed as to what's going on. It keeps my brain sharp, and it definitely helps my betting.

**Q: But you get your bets on ok? Members constantly tell me about their problems with getting their stakes down.**

**A:** Tell me about it! I obviously have an inside working knowledge of the business so I use this to my benefit in getting bets on, and placing money through a number of outlets. But it is tough. Much harder than it was a few years ago.

You and I have spoken before about getting on, and you know some of the methods I use. They're not very different to what any of the members could do - I bet with many different firms, through other channels, and other people. Yes, I can call in a few



favours here and there - which also helps. But I just approach it more as part of my job, than maybe just a hobby... so I'm on it all the time.

My advice to backers would be to use as many outlets as they can, search out value on the exchanges and do be prepared to put in a little bit of leg-work, as it does pay off.

**Q: And do you bet on other sports?**

**A:** Not that much. Obviously working where I do there's information going around on a daily basis about some horse, or a football team, or a tennis player. And some of it's good, but some of it's wide of the mark.

And I've got mates on other desks who every now and again word me up about this and that. Usually racing, that's where the bulk of the information is.

But I don't really have the time to spend studying the other sports, so I stick to the serious betting on golf. It makes me the most money after all. And it's that discipline which I've always tried to keep... it's amazing how many clients you see clean up on one sport, and then give it all back on something else.

**Q: That's interesting, so from what you know, how would you rate betting on golf compared to other sports like horseracing, football or tennis?**

**A:** Betting on golf, in my opinion, and from what I've learned from working in the industry, is definitely one of the more profitable sports to bet on for a number of reasons.

I mean, unlike sports such as football and tennis, golf prices significantly differ from firm-to-firm, especially early in the week before the market has properly formed. This means there is often huge value to be had on *Tournament Winner* bets and to some extent side markets like the *Top 20's*.

When it comes to the Majors, bookies fall over themselves to offer the best prices. Not only are they offering enhanced prices, but the each-way terms are also increased to 7 or 8 places, sometimes 10! This gives punters a huge edge as the bookies are pretty much betting to a busted book... so punters armed with a sensible staking plan, and good information, can take full advantage.

Another reason why winning money on golf is easier is the fact that most companies still only have one or two people who have to look after the whole golfing product. This means compilers simply don't have time to spend hours on each individual market and often price markets on-the-fly, without taking the greatest care and attention. I've seen this many times.

Football and tennis are harder to make money on because the prices on matches are so accurate due to the weight of money from syndicates and big Asian firms.

These prices will never differ significantly from firm-to-firm as all bookies follow the Asian lines. You may get on the right side of a football move once in a while, and beat the price, but in the long run I think you'll definitely struggle to make any significant profit.

So like you asked before, the main problem golf punters face is getting their bets on.

Golf is still a fairly niche sport when it comes to betting, and most people who bet on it outside of the Majors tend to know their stuff, or at least are following the advice of someone who does!

Therefore some firms will flag you, or even close your account, after just a few bets if they think these bets to be shrewd or informed.

It's a constant struggle to open new accounts and get bets on, however it's one worth sticking with as the profits are there to be had.

**Q: So in general terms, on a scale of 1-10, how clued-up do you think the bookies are when it comes to pricing up golf markets?**

**A:** Like I mentioned above, most firms only have a small team of golf traders who are expected to cover a wide range of tournaments and markets so the pool of expertise is sometimes limited. Some firms have very knowledgeable golf traders, guys who I'd listen to myself, while others simply don't.

I don't know for sure, but I'm certain some firms wait for others to price up markets before getting the tracing paper out and copying prices.

The majority of odds compilers are well-informed because simply they have to be! When you're in a team of two or even a one man band (like myself) you have to be good at what you do otherwise you'll be picked off all the time.

However, even the best will make mistakes as there are so many markets to price up and so little time that mistakes get made. These aren't by any means obvious mistakes but subtle ones that other shrewd punters latch onto.

On a scale of 1-10, I'd rate the bookies overall ability at pricing golf markets at 7.

**Q: Which markets should punters focus on in terms of value, and making money? And which ones should they avoid?**

**A:** I believe all markets offer punters value if the information is right.

For example *Tournament Winner* betting is definitely best during the four Majors as prices and place terms are enhanced.

*Top 20* betting is most effective when the event has less than the usual 150 runners. Firms often forget to slightly reduce the *Top 20* prices to take this into account and therefore the value is often enhanced. *Top 20* has become more and more popular over the last 18 months because there's nothing worse than tipping up a 300/1 shot who finishes 13th. You've called it right in terms of this player having a good week but you've ended up losing money as you only bet him each way! Some firms offer crazy prices in this market (Stan James especially) which means there is always value to be had.

*2/3-Balls* are one of my favourite betting mediums and one of my most profitable. The value here is not on the marquee *3-Balls*, but the lesser *3-Balls* with some of the relatively unknown players. These *3-Balls* rarely show on *Oddschecker* which is a huge advantage for people like me, as I don't have to worry about prices disappearing.

The reason why the value is here is because compilers often don't know these players well and price up the *3-Ball* thinking that nobody will bother getting on this "betting fodder" and therefore whack up any old prices.

I also like betting *3-Balls* in Round 2 once I can see how the players have all fared on Day 1. I'll look at the stats which often gives a great indication how each player has played that day. *Player A* won his *3-Ball* yet he only hit 55% Greens-In-Regulation, whereas *Player B* hit 80% Greens-In-Regulation but lost by 1 shot. This tells me that one player was in control of his golf ball and holed nothing, and the other was hitting it all over the place but holing every putt he looked at. Yet in Round 2 the bookies have *Player A* as the 4/6 favourite.

In this situation I'd be having a bet on *Player B* at 5/4 as I believe *Player A* will not be able to sustain his level on the greens etc.

I don't like betting on *2/3 balls* at the weekend because weekend golf, and especially Sundays, can do funny things to golfers so would advise swerving on these days.

*Top Nationality* and *72-hole* match bets are also good betting markets if there are certain players you want to side with or get against.

**Q: What tournaments are the best to bet on and why... Majors, WGC, European or PGA Tour or even Seniors, LPGA and the Web.com Tour?**

**A:** You could ask 10 people this question and they could all come up with different answers. This is purely a case of personal preference.

I prefer betting on events when all the players are from the same Tour so when it comes to running my golf model all the stats are equal and available on all the players. It helps when they have played the venue numerous times so there is plenty of course form.

I prefer the events from about April to October as these are mainly played in mainland Europe with strong European Tour fields. As I've previously stated you can't go wrong backing *Tournament Winner* selections at the Majors because of the enhancement offers.

Each event has its positives and negatives when it comes to betting its knowing what these are that will help when it comes to making a long term profit.

**Q: And something I asked you to think about before we met today. Have you any players that readers can keep an eye out for during the coming year? Those outside the usual suspects, that is.**

**A:** Yes, I have given this some thought. But I don't want to give away too many trade secrets!

Of course, I expect the big names to dominate, there's a lot of quality players at the top of the game right now and the cream does tend to rise to the top, especially at the Majors and big WGC events.

However there are plenty of tournaments to go round... and there's always a big payday waiting at one of them with a guy that's maybe not won before, or who is a bit of an unknown with some of the layers. That's the beauty of golf betting.

And more importantly, often with these guys you're going to see the odd slip from the compilers, the occasional bad price, and that's going to mean value in the market. Not every trader will be across each and every player (and some of the guys I've worked with had almost no idea once the top 50 players were priced up).

Knowing these kind of players, and backing at these kind of odds, is what makes the winning punters win... digging out the value and not always backing the well-known, and often over-bet, name player... and there's certain ones who you'd lay all day long.

So I've got you three guys off each tour, in Europe and on the PGA. They're all improving players, all hugely talented, all of them should be prices when they play.

To start off, these three are all on the European Tour...



**Victor Perez** - "The 27-year-old is a bit older than most who graduate to the main European Tour, but great things are expected of the Frenchman after he secured his card for 2019.

Perez is a previous two-time winner on the Challenge Tour, and has already posted several high finishes among better quality opposition on the main tour, the latest of these being the Hong Kong Open (3<sup>rd</sup>) late in 2018. So he's clearly ready to make the step up.

A great driver of the ball, long off the tee, and with a decent touch on the greens, there's absolutely no reason why Perez can't record a maiden win in his rookie year on the circuit. Remember the name."



**Marcus Kinhult** - "He's been on my radar for quite some time now, and we first backed the young Swede back in January 2016 (South African Open), and then again in August 2018 (Nordea Masters).

Kinhult is yet to win on tour (*all the guys mentioned here are maidens i.e. without a main tour win to their name*) but he's posted several eye-catching finishes in 2018, most notably in the Qatar Masters (3<sup>rd</sup>), French Open (5<sup>th</sup>) and the Portugal Masters (4<sup>th</sup>).

He's not that long off the tee by modern standards (around 295 yards), but he's a very tidy player on and around the greens. A developing talent, Kinhult is very much one to watch."

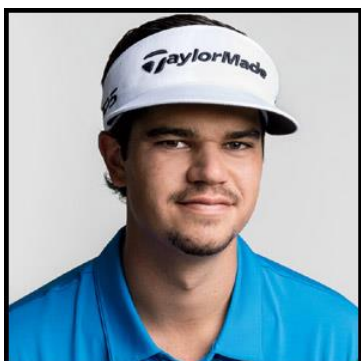


**Lucas Herbert** - "I think it's two, or maybe three times that we've backed the Aussie on the service... and whilst he's yet to reach the winners circle, it's only a matter of time before he lands his first title.

He's long off the tee, at 310+ yards, and his solid iron play is reflected in his consistently high ranking for Greens-In-Regulation. And to complete a very polished all-round game, Herbert's putting stats aren't too shabby either!

He posted a number of Top 10's throughout 2018 and in a book he's one that I always like to be on the right side of. A definite talent and cast-iron future winner. Has to be on the short-list."

And then over in the States, on the PGA Tour I'd recommend...



**Beau Hossler** - "I've backed this guy several times already, and put him up on the service before... and I just can't see him not winning at some point during 2019, he's too good and has come too close to not land one.

He's 300+ yards off the tee, a solid iron player and his putting is steady enough on the greens. And at just 23, I can only see Hossler's game getting better, and as he gets more experienced then it's just a matter of time before he converts and lands a first PGA title.

His price will reflect the fact that he's on the radar of a few golf watchers, but he'll still be value until he makes the grade. I've no doubts that Hossler will win in 2019, no doubts at all."



**Sam Burns** - "A winner on the Web.com Tour, Burns is a player who I've noted several times over the past 12-18 months, and I think he'll start to make his mark this year once his game gets more consistent.

He's shown flashes of talent already at the Honda Classic (8<sup>th</sup>), and the Sanderson Farms (3<sup>rd</sup>)... but a number of missed cuts show that he's still not fully established on the main tour. But that's ok as his odds will be that much juicier as a result.

It's probably going to be one of the weaker tournaments where Burns gets his best chance of success, but barely 22-years-old, time is on his side and he'll only get better."



**Sungjae Im** - "This guy is meant to be the next big thing, and he's already a marked man in terms of the layers... his record on the Web.com Tour suggesting that he could be very good indeed.

He won the Money List in 2018, winning twice and posting three 2<sup>nd</sup> places... and he's already posted a 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Safeway Open on the main PGA Tour. And the frightening thing to note is that this guy is only 20! So we're going to see a lot of him over the coming years.

The South Korean started playing at Nine Bridges (host course of the CJ Cup) and that kind of pedigree marks him out as a real prospect. Probably the best advice I can give about him is to catch him early!"

**Q: So we've touched on the idea of value a couple of times, and I've always been a firm believer that it's the only way to make a long-term profit in terms**



**of betting. What are your thoughts on the importance of getting the right price about your bets?**

**A:** In terms of compiling a book, or making a bet... it's everything. You have to know what's the right price, and what's the wrong price.

Ok, you might not get this right every single time, and I get picked off myself every now and again. But if you get it right the majority of the time then your chance of success, or edge as you call it, is hugely increased.

I know you've done some figures yourself about the Tournament Winner bets advised since the service started. And looking at them, every single bet advised (1,665 in total), the average price is almost bang-on 80/1.

Now these odds would equate to an average finishing position of somewhere around the 46-49 mark (in a regular tournament field).

Well, the bets advised finish up, on average, placing inside the Top 40.

So what this means is that over 1,665 bets, going back over a number of years, the bets are regularly beating the odds. And that's value.

We all know every bet isn't going to win... despite what some of my customers (and your members) seem to think! But this is the value principle that my pricing up, and my betting, is based on. And it's why I know I can beat the book when I'm betting for myself, and for your members.

Value is always bandied about as the key to betting successfully, and it really is.

**Q: But the key is being able to determine what exactly this value is?**

**A:** Of course. And that's what my pricing model is all about. What my research helps me with, and the guys I know on tour, when they give me the odd bit of news too.

What I've found in the years that I've been in the business is that value is becoming better to judge, not exactly easier, but more data means more accurate assessments can be made.

Back when I started it was more old school, a bit less automated, but now a value book is operated on much more consistent, and accurate, level.

**Q: Which makes winning harder?**

**A:** Sadly! But with hard work and the right information you can still win. And that's what the figures show year on year.

**Q: Thanks for your time today. Just to wrap things up, can you give one nugget of general advice you could give the average punter to improve their betting... one of your "tricks of the trade".**

**A:** The main bit of advice I'd give to the average punter is to be patient, and don't go chasing losses.

With golf you have to play the long game as average *Tournament Winner* prices are in excess of 33/1.



So you're not going to back winners every week, or even every month... but I promise you that by the end of the year you'll be in profit if you stick to your staking plan.

Not chasing losses is easier said than done because even the most disciplined punters chase once in a while, but minimising these impulse bets is crucial to a long-term profit.

When it comes to *Tournament Winner* bets for normal tour events the earlier you bet the more value there is to be had. Monday afternoon/evening is when it's best to strike not Wednesday afternoon when the all the value has been hoovered up by the judges.

The best three accounts to have when it comes to golf betting are *BetVictor* (BVC), *Paddy Power* (PPW) and *Stan James/Unibet* (SJA/UNI).

If possible place your bets in shops as you're much more likely to go undetected, but I appreciate this is not always possible.

The best way to go undetected is to bet later in the evening from about 8pm onwards as most golf compilers will have gone home and won't be monitoring the ticker (the program that shows all the bets that are struck). This way you can slip under the radar.

Obviously they check all big winning bets so if you back a winner they'll probably start to monitor you more closely but that's just a fact of life.

But stick at it and I can guarantee you that golf betting is one of the best ways to beat the bookies. And that's me saying it!!

**MW: Great stuff. Thanks very much for your time today.**

*Interview ends 12:23pm.*

## Section 8: Golf terminology

**Albatross:** A score of three-under-par on a hole e.g. taking 2 shots on a par 5 hole.

**All-Round Ranking:** A compilation of a player's ranking in the various key categories, which include *Scoring Leaders, Putting Leaders, Eagle Leaders, Birdie Leaders, Sand Saves, Greens-In-Regulation, Driving Distance* and *Driving Accuracy*.

**Angle of Approach (or Attack):** A term that describes the relative angle which the clubhead approaches the ball at impact which, in turn, helps determine the distance and trajectory which the ball travels.

**Approach:** A shot hit towards the green or towards the hole.

**Backswing:** The motion that involves the club and every element of the body in taking the club away from the ball and setting it in position at the top of the backswing from which the club can be delivered to the ball at impact.

**Backspin:** The rotational movement, or spin of the ball, produced by contact with the clubface. The greater the backspin, the higher the ball will fly and the more it will spin, and therefore stop or even spin backwards on impact with the turf.

**Ball Striking:** This is a combined figure calculated from a player's *Total Driving* and *Greens-In-Regulation* figures.

**Birdie:** A score of one under par on a hole e.g. taking 3 shots on a par 4 hole.

**Birdie Average:** The average number of birdies made per rounds played. The same applies for eagles, bogeys and double bogeys.

**Bogey:** A score of one-over-par on a hole e.g. taking 6 shots on a par 5 hole.

**Borrow:** The amount of break a player allows for when hitting a breaking putt.

**Break:** The amount a putt will curve to the side because of the slope, grain and wind that affect the movement of the ball.

**Bump and Run:** A pitch shot around the green in which the player hits the ball into a slope to deaden its speed before settling on the green and rolling towards the hole.

**Bunker:** A hollow comprised of sand or grass or both that exists as an obstacle and, in some cases, a hazard.

**Carry:** The distance a ball will fly in the air, usually to carry a hazard or safely reach a target.

**Chip and Run:** A low-running shot played around the greens where the ball spends more time on the ground than in the air.

**Choke:** A derogatory term describing poor play that results from nervousness.

**Closed Clubface:** The position formed when the toe of the club is closer to the ball than the heel, either at address or impact, which causes the clubface to point to the left of the target line.

**Closed Clubface:** (swing) A position during the swing in which the clubface is angled

to the left of the target line or swing plane, generally resulting in shots hit to the left of the target.

**Closed Grip:** Generally referred to as a strong grip because both hands are turned away from the target.

**Closed Stance:** A description of a stance when the rear foot is pulled back away from the target line.

**Cross-Handed:** A grip in which the left (or lead) hand is placed below the right hand (in other words, a grip that is the opposite of the traditional grips).

**Divot:** The turf displaced when the club strikes the ball on a descending path.

**Double Bogey:** A score of two-over-par on a hole e.g. taking 5 shots on a par 3 hole.

**Dormie:** The point in match play when a player is up in a match by the same number of holes that remain.

**Draw:** A shot that flies slightly from right-to-left for right-handed players.

**Driving Accuracy:** The percentage of time a player's tee shot ends up on the fairway.

**Driving Distance:** The average distance isn't taken from the tee shot of players on every single hole they play. The figure is usually calculated from an average of two holes per round – these holes facing in different directions relative to the wind to give a more accurate assessment.

**Eagle:** A score of two-under-par on a hole e.g. taking 3 shots on a par 5 hole.

**Fade:** A shot that flies slightly from left-to-right.

**Fat Shot:** A description of a shot when the clubhead strikes the turf behind the ball, resulting in poor contact and a shot that comes up well short of the target.

**Flier:** A shot from the rough or in wet conditions that reduces the amount of backspin on the ball, causing it to fly lower and farther than it might under normal conditions.

**Flip Shot:** A shot, usually played with a wedge, that involves a wristy swing designed to hit the ball a short distance but with a lot of height.

**Flop Shot:** Similar to a flip shot except that it involves a long, slower swing.

**Fluffy Lie:** A lie in which the ball rests atop the longish grass. This can be a tricky lie because the tendency is to swing the clubhead under the ball, reducing the distance it carries.

**Fly:** The distance the ball carries or a shot that carries over the intended target.

**Follow-through:** That part of the swing that occurs after the ball has been struck.

**Grain:** The direction which the blades of grass grow, which is of primary importance on the greens (particularly Bermuda grass greens) as this can affect how much and in which direction a putt breaks.

**Greens-In-Regulation:** The percentage of time a player is able to hit the green-in-regulation. The regulation figure for each hole is determined by taking 2 from the par score (so for a par 3 it's a player's 1<sup>st</sup> stroke, on a par 4 his 2<sup>nd</sup> and a par 5 his 3<sup>rd</sup>).

**Grip:** The placing and positioning of the hands on the club. The various types include the Vardon or overlapping, the interlocking and the 10-finger or baseball grip. (The Vardon grip is the most popular grip today). There is also the reverse-overlapping grip, in which the index finger of the left or top hand overlaps the smallest finger of the right or bottom hand. This is primarily used in putting, although some players use this grip when chipping the ball.

**Heel:** The part of the clubhead nearest the hosel (see below). A shot hit off the heel is said to be "heeled".

**Hook:** A shot that curves sharply from right to left for right-handed players.

**Hosel:** The part of the club connecting the shaft to the clubhead.

**Inside-to-In:** A description of the swing path that, all things being equal, will produce the greatest percentage of solid, straight and on-target shots. It refers to a path in which the clubhead travels from inside the target line, to impact, and then back inside the target line.

**Inside-to-Out:** A swing path in which the clubhead approaches the ball from inside the target line and, after contact, continues to the outside of the target line before turning back to the inside of the target line.

**Lag:** A shot (usually a pitch, chip or putt) designed to finish short of the target.

**Lay up:** To intentionally hit a shot short in order to avoid a trap (water, bunker) or to provide a better position from which to play the next shot.

**Level-Par:** A term describing a score of even par.

**Lie:** As it relates to the ball, the position of the ball when it has come to rest. As it relates to the club, it is the angle of the sole of the club relative to the shaft.

**Loft:** The degree of angle on the clubface, with the least loft on a putter and the most on a sand wedge. It also describes the act of hitting a shot.

**Long Irons:** The 1-4 irons.

**Mulligan:** The custom of hitting a second ball - without penalty - on a hole, usually the 1st tee.

**Offset:** A measure of the distance between the leading edge of the hosel and the leading edge of the clubface.

**Open Clubface:** When, either at address or during the swing, the heel of the clubhead is leading the toe, causing the clubface to point to the side of the target.

**Open Grip:** Also referred to as a weak grip, it is when the hands are turned counter-clockwise on the club.

**Open Stance:** When the left or lead foot is pulled back farther from the target line than the rear or right foot. This stance generally helps promote a left-to-right ball flight.

**Open-to-Closed:** A description of the movement of the clubface when a player fans it open on the backswing and then closes it at impact.

**Outside-to-In:** A description of a swing path when the clubhead approaches the ball from outside the target line and then continues to the inside of that line following

impact.

**Overclub:** To pick the wrong club, usually for an approach shot, causing the ball to go over the green.

**Pace:** The speed of the golf swing or the speed of the greens.

**Par:** The score an accomplished player is expected to make on a hole e.g. taking 3 shots on a par 3 hole, 4 on a par 4 etc.

**Path:** The direction the club travels during the swing or the putting stroke. This is best observed from an overhead view.

**Pitch-and-Run:** A shot from around the green, usually with a middle or short iron, where the ball carries in the air for a short distance before running towards the hole.

**Plugged Lie:** The condition when the ball comes to rest in its own pitch mark, usually in a bunker or soft turf.

**Pre-Shot Routine:** The actions a player takes from the time he selects a club until he begins the swing.

**Pulled Shot:** A relatively straight shot that begins to the side of the target and doesn't curve back.

**Putt:** A shot taken with a putter on or off the green.

**Putting Average:** The average number of putts a player takes on all greens hit in regulation.

**Reading the Green (or Putt):** The entire process involved in judging the break and path of a putt.

**Recover:** To successfully hit a shot from a poor location.

**Sand Save percentage:** The percentage of time a player is able to get down in two shots or less from being in a greenside bunker - one chip and one putt, or a chip-in directly into the hole.

**Scoring Average:** How many shots a player takes in a full round of 18 holes. This is an adjusted figure, calculated by comparing each player's score in relation to the whole field average.

**Scoring Average (Actual):** Total number of strokes divided by rounds played.

**Scrambling:** The percentage of times a player misses the green in regulation, but still scores par or better on the hole.

**Scramble:** To recover from or a popular form of team play in which the team members pick the ball in the best position and everyone plays from that spot.

**Shank:** When the ball is struck on the hosel of the club, usually sending it shooting off to the right.

**Shape:** To curve a shot to fit the situation. The word is also used to describe the flight of the ball.

**Short Game:** Those shots played on and around the green, including putting, chipping and pitching, and bunker shots.

**Short Irons:** The 8 and 9 irons and the pitching wedge. The sand wedge is considered a scoring or speciality club.

**Slice:** A ball that curves from left-to-right to a greater degree than a fade.

**Splash Shot:** A shot played from a good lie in the bunker. The club "splashes" through the sand, throwing the ball into the air.

**Stance:** The position of the feet at address.

**Strokes Gained Putting:** The number of strokes a player takes from a specific distance on the green, measured against a standard figure which determines a player's +/- score for each hole.

**Strokes Gained Tee-To-Green:** The per round average of the number of strokes a player was better or worse than the field average on the same course and same event, less the *Strokes Gained Putting* value.

**Strokes Gained Total:** The average number of strokes a player was better or worse than the field on the same course, in the same round.

**Stroke Play:** Also known as medal play, it is a form of competition based on the cumulative number of strokes taken, either over one round or several.

**Sweet Spot:** The point on the clubface where, if it is struck with an object, the clubface will not torque or twist to either side.

**Swing Plane:** An imaginary surface that describes the path and angle of the club during the swing.

**Takeaway:** The movement of the club at the start of the backswing.

**Tee Box:** The area where players tee to start a hole.

**Tempo:** The speed of the swing (not necessarily the clubhead speed).

**Texas Wedge:** A term describing a shot played with a putter from well off the green. It is a good shot for players who lack confidence in their chipping and pitching, or in extremely windy conditions.

**Three-Quarter Shot:** A shot played with a shortened backswing and lessened arm speed.

**Timing:** The sequence of motions within the golf swing.

**Topped Shot:** A low, bouncing shot caused by the bottom of the club striking the top half of the ball.

**Total Driving:** This is a combined figure taken from a player's *Driving Distance* and *Driving Accuracy* figures.

**Total Putting:** Combined figures from a number of different putting distances (from 3 feet up to 25+ feet) which are assessed as a whole to produce a player's rating

**Touch:** A player's sense of feel, generally around the greens.

**Trajectory:** The height and angle the ball travels when struck.



**Transition:** The change of direction in the swing, from the backswing to the forward swing.

**Waggle:** A motion or several motions designed to keep a player relaxed at address and help establish a smooth pace in the takeaway and swing.

**Yips:** A condition, generally believed to be psychological, which causes a player to lose control of his hands and club. This generally occurs when putting or in the short game, but it can also afflict people when hitting a tee shot

If you have any questions, comments or general feedback about golf betting in general, or the Golf Insider in particular, then by all means do get in touch.

Contact:-

01625 315654 (office)

07752 768094 (mobile)

[matthew@matthewwalton.co.uk](mailto:matthew@matthewwalton.co.uk)