



PETER
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SPORTS BETTING

DIFFERING fortunes are expected for Cork this weekend as the All-Ireland series in both codes really begin to take shape across the country with Leaside eyes fixated on Croke Park and Thurles.

In terms of Conor Counihan's outfit, Cork are four-, five- and six-point favourites to dispose of Galway and gain a place in the last eight of the championship against any one of Dublin, Mayo or Monaghan.

William Hill are the firm that have their main handicap betting line set at four points with Cork 8-11 to surpass that imposed deficit and Galway 13-10 to stay within such boundaries.

Bet365, Stan James, Ladbrokes and Coral, however, have set the bar at five points with The Magic Sign offering 5-6 Cork to win by six or more points though the other three firms are laying 10-11.

Boyles, BetVictor and Paddy Power, meanwhile, foresee Cork as being at least a six-point superior side to the westerners with the first two firms offering bettors evens the Rebels to advance by seven or more points.

However, given those three handicap betting lines seem quite accurate it might be worth having a minor-stakes bet on Cork winning by four to six points in the winning margin market at Boyles' 7-2 – the same bet is just 13-5 with William Hill.

Galway will have gained much confidence from their triumph last Saturday and though Cork are understandably long odds-on to qualify – Counihan's charges are no better than 1-7 to progress by any means – it is unlikely the Leasideers will want to overextend themselves with a potential All-Ireland quarter-final around the corner.

Jimmy Barry-Murphy's hurlers, however, may not fare as well on Sunday unfortunately.

Though the majority of firms have Kilkenny as four-point favourites BetVictor have the Cats as

Sharpened claws of Cats to beat Rebels



London's Cathal Magee with Colm Boyle and Tom Cunniffe of Mayo in last weekend's Connacht final.

Picture: INPHO/James Crombie

three-point jollies at 10-11 and that appears to be a sound bet indeed.

However hard to stomach, Cork are still in the region of being six, seven points inferior to Brian Cody's unit for now and though the Leasideers could be extremely competitive for the first 50 to 55 minutes of the encounter Kilkenny's greater power and experience may prove to be a telling factor in the last quarter.

Cork, 11-10 +4 with bet365, can be punted on at odds of 100-30 with the same firm while being laid at Ladbrokes' 11-4 to qualify.

In the second scheduled quarter-fi-

nal in Thurles, Galway are odds-on to get to the last four again but Clare could scupper Anthony Cunningham's plans.

Available at 6-4 with bet365 and Ladbrokes, Clare seem to be overpriced to topple the mentally weak westerners.

In 13 championship meetings between these two Clare have won eight while another has been a draw so traditionally the Bannermen do not fear their near neighbours.

Granted, Galway have won three of the last four championship tussles between them but Clare, very much unconvincing earlier on in the cam-

paign, are growing in stature.

They may do so on Sunday but Clare are value to win by four to six points.

LAST WEEK

THE recommended 'Summer Banker' in the All-Ireland SFC ante-post outright special, published last Friday, May 24 – Dublin (4-7) to win Leinster SFC & Mayo (1-4) to win Connacht SFC double (6pts .96-1 William Hill) – copped last Sunday as James Horan's side expectedly scolded London in the provincial final in the west.

Mayo to win the All-Ireland SFC (1.5pts each-way 1/2 1, 2 8-1 bet365,

BetVictor, William Hill), also recommended on May 24, is another ante-post investment in a very healthy state as Horan's men – just 11-10 (Paddy Power) to reach the All-Ireland final – are as low as 3-1 with Ladbrokes to lift Sam Maguire.

Additionally, the six operators recommended in the GAA/GPA Footballer of the Year market are either trading at a best-available current price equal to what they were advised at or trading shorter.

Dublin's Paul Flynn, the headline selection, recommended at Ladbrokes' 40-1, is presently between Power's 15-2 and Boyles' 10-1 – the outstanding wing-forward is second-favourite.

Michael Dara Macauley was tipped at Boyles' 50-1 though is no greater than 25-1 with Power and Ladbrokes while Boyles lay just 16-1 now.

Diarmuid Connolly, advised at Ladbrokes' 33-1, is merely 9-1 (Power) but Boyles are still laying 16-1 while Paddy Andrews, put forward at 50-1, remains available at those odds with Ladbrokes however, Power offer 33-1.

And in terms of the two Mayo players backed, Alan Dillon was given at 33-1 and though still that price with Power is 25-1 elsewhere and Keith Higgins, highlighted at Ladbrokes' 80-1, is presently no better than Boyles' 28-1 and as short as 20-1 with Power.

Counteracting those positives, however, 7.5 staking points were wasted on trusting both Armagh and Derry last weekend in the third round of the All-Ireland SFC qualifiers with both expected to prevail with relative ease.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cork to win by 4-6 points, 0.5pt 7-2 Boyles.
Kilkenny -3, 2pts 10-11 BetVictor;
Clare, 1.5pts 6-4 bet365, Ladbrokes;
Clare to win by 4-6 points, 0.5pt 13-2 Stan James, Ladbrokes.

Cork-Galway double can steer you on path to greater things

WHEN we left you yesterday we were halfway through the second most disastrous driving test of this writer's life.

For the verbal part of the test, I had faced down some tough questions, like: "What is the rule about passing animals on the road?"

My unnecessarily gruff examiner hadn't specified a species, so I imagined he might be referring to cows.

"Don't try to find a meandering path through them, wait until they have followed the head cow into another field," was my best stab.

His expression was impassive, leaving me guessing just how right I was.

Not that was I too worried about the tiny mistakes I might have made. The first time I'd done the test, my preparations had been inexcusably slapdash, but a friend had told me that no matter how many questions you got wrong, it didn't matter, once you aced the driving.

"You can get into your ve-heh-cle," said my examiner, Tony.

Now, had he been a bit friendlier up to this point I probably wouldn't have corrected his gaffe, but considering this

was his line of work, I repeated the word back to him: "Vehicle. Vee-hi-cle."

He affected not to have heard and after I climbed in, he asked me to show him I could use the indicator while he checked the lights. I could have assured him I wouldn't have bothered turning up if I didn't know even these basics!

After this, Tony stood outside the passenger seat door for what I considered was an inordinate amount of time and I was worried he had spotted something wrong with the car, excessively muddy hoods or some technicality.

When he knocked on the window I determined I had failed to unlock his door.

Before he had belted up it was spot quiz time. I quickly identified where every gadget was, except for the fog lights. It was the first crack I had shown in 10 test minutes, but I quickly saved the situation by saying: "This isn't my usual car." How was he to know?

I keyed the ignition and we were off. This was where I as going to nail the test: behind the wheel.

I observed, I turned, I was awareness in a human form and when my



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THE LONGSHOT

gaze wasn't glued on the road it was seltopped to my rear-view mirrors.

Things were going well.

After performing the three-point twist as quickly and smoothly as a handbrake turn on a very narrow road, I sensed Tony was putty in my driving gloves.

He blinked first. Right after this immaculate manoeuvre, he asked me to pull over to display hand signals.

Surely, he couldn't have missed the car coming up behind us? He had.

Instructed to display hand signals out my window, I first showed the man in the car behind that I was going left. Then, immediately after this, that I was going right. Then, despite being stationary and holding him up, I signalled I was slowing down.

By the time I moved on to the signals for an imaginary guard ahead, the driver had pulled alongside and spat a few swear words at us. Eliciting such emotions is the last thing you want on your driving test, but I blamed Tony.

My next trick was backing around a corner, something I excel at because of practice due to my unwillingness to ask for directions.

It was only when I was back motoring after some impeccable reversing, that I spotted a possible snag: I'd failed to re-adjust the left wing mirror I'd lowered to keep an eye on the sidewalk while backing up. I was blind on the left side.

I wasn't sure if Tony had noticed so I made exaggerated looks towards it, feigning I could see more than just tarmac.

It seemed to work as he was soon dangling his knuckle out the window and blocking my already limited view.

He was either toying with me over what I registered was a major boob or he was simply sitting back and enjoying the ride back to base.

I parked up and we walked back to his little room where the verdict awaited.

"I'm afraid I have bad news for you Robert..."

Used to Chris Tarrant and his hundred reality talent show copycats, I expected him to utter next something along the lines of "... you're going to be the designated driver from now on. Well done!"

Instead he said: "You parked illegally when we arrived back here."

"What?"

"Up on the pavement."

"I did not... wait, I failed on that. Would I have passed otherwise?"

"Yes, but you could improve in these areas for your next test..."

He droned on about stop signs and coasting the clutch but I only caught a few words as I choked back sobs.

When I returned to the car, nestled parallel between two other pathological parkers, six inches of rubber were caressing an indistinct curb.

I'd been on the verge of passing, I was on the verge of tears, but most unfortunate of all, I was on the verge.

Recommendation: Cork to beat the Cats and Galway to beat Tyrone at 16/1 with Bet365.