



PETER
McNAMARA

SPORT BETTING

CORK are 8-15 to qualify for the All-Ireland final when Conor Counihan's men tackle Donegal on Sunday and trust the Rebels to do so with four to six points to spare at headquarters.

Cork can be backed at 4-6 to win the match but at 10-11 giving Donegal a one-point start the Rebels can give punters a healthy return.

The majority of people across the country expect this match to be extremely tight, and it should be until the final quarter because Cork have the quality to pull clear as the clock winds down and they can win this quite comfortably in the end.

As well as backing Cork to win by two or more points in the handicap betting market also take the Rebels to win by four to six points in the winning margin market at odds of 4-1 to small stakes.

And the man leading the Leaside charge could well be Donncha O'Connor, a potential man of the match.

Recommendations

Cork -1 (v Donegal)
4pts 10-11 general;
Cork to win by four to six points
0.5pt 4-1 general;
Donncha O'Connor (Cork) to be named RTÉ Sunday Game Man of the Match
0.5pt best available odds.

FAI FORD CUP

IN two previous Airtricity League Premier Division clashes this season between Shamrock Rovers and Cork City both teams have scored and there is every reason to foresee the same scenario transpiring at Tallaght Stadium tonight in the FAI Ford Cup.

The RTÉ cameras will be at the home of the Airtricity League Premier Division champions for the game which suggests even the national broadcaster is expecting fireworks and this does have the makings of a cracking cup tie.

Tournament second favourites at 7-2 with Boyles and Paddy Power, Rovers are 4-7 to win in 90 minutes and 8-5 giving City a goal-start in the handicap market, both prices available generally.

Bet365 and BetVictor are laying City, ranging from bwin.com's 10-1 to Paddy Power's 14-1 to lift the trophy, at 5-1 while Boyles are offering punters 5-4 the Leaside +1 (the handicap draw is 5-2 generally). The

Rebels will pull away in the final quarter



LAST WEEK

THERE were more goals scored than anticipated at the UCD Bowl last weekend as the trends were bucked in the Students-Cork City Airtricity League meeting rendering our only weekend recommendation – the others were ante-post investments – a loser.

Under 2.5 goals (1pt 8-11 bet365, BetVictor, Stan James) was advised.

If Daryl Horgan and co can get among the goals for Cork City then both teams to score at 10-11 is a decent bet.

match betting draw is 11-4 with bet365 and Paddy Power.

However, the shrewder call is to stay clear of the match and handicap betting markets and instead back both teams to score at bwin.com's 10-11.

Rovers and City have met twice already this term and both games ended in 1-1 draws.

Interestingly, in 10 of City's last 13 competitive outings both teams have found the net too and there has been nine goals scored alone in their last two league fixtures.

Rovers, statistically, are quite solid defensively this term however, in their three most

recent domestic cup clashes both goalkeepers have found themselves picking the ball out of the net and also in two of the last three league matches they have played in.

Tommy Dunne will be most content to play out an uneventful 0-0 draw in theory but the reality is his side do not appear to be capable of keeping clean sheets at the moment so the likelihood is the Rebel Army will need at least one goal tonight if they are to remain in the competition.

Mr Consistency Donnacha O'Connor may be worth a bet as man of the match.

Added to that, he will also be mindful of trying to avoid Rovers gaining an edge on City ahead of next weekend's third league meeting so will therefore not want to be too conservative either himself at the same time.

With Daryl Horgan, Kiegan Parker, Vinny Sullivan and Davin O'Neill all viable attacking options City have goals in their side and it is hard to see this being anything but entertaining.

Munster Senior League and FAI Ford Intermediate Cup champions Avondale United are understandably considered by the layers to be up against it as they take on Bohs at Dalymount Park tonight but John Cotter's men might be worth a small investment +2 at 20-23 with Boyles in the handicap betting market.

Bohs, available at odds ranging from 8-1 (Paddy Power) to 12-1 (Boyles) to win the competition out-

right, face a Cork team rated as one of the 150-1 (Boyles, Ladbrokes) outsiders.

Avondale are 11-1 with bet365 and Paddy Power to win in 90 minutes though skyBET's more flattering assessment making Cotter's side 17-2 is probably a more accurate gauge of their chances.

United's chance of winning tonight may be minimal but certainly not as minimal as 11-1 suggests.

Therefore, Boyles' 20-23 for Avondale to lose by one or better is worth taking given that the gulf in class between the teams is not accurately reflected in the various match betting markets.

Recommendations

Shamrock Rovers v Cork City
Both teams to score
2pts 10-11 bwin.com;
Bohemians v Avondale United
Avondale +2
1pt 20-23 Boyles.

Flush your money down the Meadow on del Potro

ONCE a year I like to devote a day to answering questions sent in from primary school students, or the punters of tomorrow as I like to think of them.

Unfortunately, the day we devoted to them last year was a Monday and I am not allowed write about betting on that day for some unenlightened reasons my boss won't explain.

Anyway, on to the questions.

Is gambling a good way to make money, writes Tommy?

It certainly is not. The best way to make money is to listen at school and take up hobbies outside it. That way when you grow up you will get

a job that will pay you enough to cover the essentials such as mortgages and beer, with a little left over for the odd wager.

But what if you want to make a lot of money? Don't you need to gamble one way or another, asks Greg?

The best way to make a lot of money is to get really good at one of your hobbies and some day someone will mention you could make some money from it, and you will say "This? No. I only do this because I love doing it."

But sure enough someone will come along and offer you money for



Robert
O'Shea

THE LONGSHOT

your expertise and soon you'll be rich, but you won't like your hobby any more.

Is gambling a hobby, wonders Pam?

Good question, Pam. Gambling is a way of life. You must choose to pursue lady luck, that elusive harlot. Try to catch her and she wafts away.

Clutch at her and you grasp but the wispy tendrils of a dream. Do not sulk. She will lure you to her and send you reeling with her fragrant mystery oils. When you come back to reality, your pockets will be bursting with cash or worthless docketts.

So, I'm going to say, no, it's not a hobby.

Why are there no betting markets on the Paralympics, asks David?

Bookmakers suspect people who are missing limbs are more likely to fix sporting events because 80% of those competing will have lost their limb in a bet.

Is that true, asks Deirdre?
Probably not.

Who will win the US Open in tennis that starts on Monday, interjects Eamon impatiently?

Juan Martin Del Potro has won in Flushing Meadows before and is the only option outside the big three (now Nadal has pulled out).

Li Na is not an outsider per se, but with odds of near 20-1 still available, she looks worth a dabble after just making back-to-back finals in Montreal and Cincinnati.

Recommendation: Del Potro to win the US Open at 12-1 with Stan James.