

## Detroit Lions' roaring value

**AMERICAN FOOTBALL:** SKYBET and Paddy Power rate Detroit Lions a 10-13 shot as they host Cincinnati Bengals, 6-5 generally, in one of two Sky televised matches on Sunday. Detroit are the -2.5-point spread favourites also at 10-11 while Cincinnati can be punted on at the same odds in receipt of the 2.5-point buffer. Meanwhile, Ladbrokes' 10-17 are the best odds available on hosts Kansas City Chiefs overcoming Houston Texans in the second live offering. The latter unit are trading around the 5-2 mark. Kansas are 10-11 -6.5.

## Cirrus well supported

**HORSE RACING:** CIRRUS DES AIGLES has been supported into 11-10 from an industry-high ante-post 16-1 to win the Qipco Champion Stakes at Ascot on Saturday. Chantilly-based trainer Corine Barande-Barbe revealed the horse is in "perfect nick" and punters have latched on to the challenger. William Hill, however, are laying Cirrus Des Aigles at 4-5 thus confirming how highly thought of his charge currently is. Farhh is the 4-1 second-favourite.

## Munster favourites

**RUGBY:** MUNSTER are 10-point favourites to account for Gloucester in their Heineken Cup meeting at Thomond Park on Saturday. Rob Penney's side, unexpectedly humbled by Edinburgh last Saturday, are available to back at 10-11 to win by 11 or more points while are merely 2-9 with Boyles and sportingbet.com to win the tie. Gloucester can be supported for victory at bwin.com's 9-2 and evens with Stan James +10. The draw is 25-1.

## Vettel unbackable

**MOTORSPORT:** RED BULL'S Sebastian Vettel is quickly becoming a virtually unbackable favourite for every F1 outing and the forthcoming Indian Grand Prix is no different as the driver is 6-11 with 888sport.com to achieve another race success. Vettel, 1-2 generally to win, is followed in the betting by Mark Webber. Red Bull's other driver is 7-1 (Ladbrokes). Lewis Hamilton, additionally, is a 10-1 shot with BetVictor but the Mercedes challenger is 6-1 with 888sport.com.

# Hard to look past Sars for title win

**A**CCORDING to the layers, Sarsfields and Midleton will contest the Cork County SHC final this year based on the odds available on their respective semi-finals being played on Sunday.

In fact, Sars are no greater than 8-13 to retain their title while the Magpies are 9-4 to earn outright success. Paddy Power have Na Piarasigh pitched as the 9-1 third-favourites and Ballymartle are installed at 10-1 with Boyles and Ladbrokes to lift the silverware. In terms of the match betting, Sars, incredibly, are as short as 1-7 to post a victory against Ballymartle but Power do offer 1-5. Their opponents are 5-1 to win with Boyles while the draw is 12-1 generally. And the gulf in that particular market is understandable given how consistent Sars have been in recent years but this tie may not be as straightforward as the bookmakers believe and so there may be a little mileage to be had in having a minor punt on Ballymartle to stay within the five-point cushion at evens with Power. Sars are the more likely victors and should win but the defending champions are susceptible on this occasion given their

## SPORTS BETTING Peter McNamara

well-documented issues with missing a number of key men and Ballymartle will attempt to throw the kitchen sink at them. Additionally, semi-finals are not usually one-sided encounters so even though Sars are expected to reach the final again Ballymartle should produce a credible performance in a possible defeat. Bet365, meanwhile, are rating Midleton as a 4-11 chance to knock northsiders Na Piarasigh out of the competition later in the afternoon, also at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Yet, Ladbrokes fancy the Magpies even more laying them at 2-7 while offering their opponents at 3-1, the best price around. Bet365's 11-1 counts as the most enticing odds laid on the draw however, it is unlikely the odds-compilers have gotten it wrong keeping Midleton on-side in the match betting market. Midleton are also 10-11 to win the tie by four or more points but the three-point deficit margin imposed by Power seems quite accurate in fact so it would not surprise if the



Midleton's James Nagle goes highest from Bishopstown's Paul Honohan during the Cork SHC quarter-final at Páirc Uí Chaoimh. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

## Last week

**GERMANY** were very strongly advised to beat Republic of Ireland by two or more goals last Friday night (5pts 8-15 sportingbet.com) and duly landed another winner for the column. However, Nemo Rangers' subsequent final loss took from those profits somewhat (2pts 13-10 bet365, Paddy Power).

# I learned people in glass towers should throw tips

FOR those of you not in the know, we are on the move. The Echo tugboat is steaming off to Blackpool on Monday, with the steamship the Irish Examiner in tow. I'll be vacating Lapps Quay at around 9pm tonight, so if anyone wants to watch my tearful departure as I rappel down the outside of the building from the fifth floor, they are more than welcome. The emotional farewell will continue at a bar in the city yet to be decided upon. This building has very happy memories for me, most involving not being fired for coming in extremely late. It is where I gave up writing the

topical news column that predicted the end of the Celtic Tiger in 2008 (admittedly, I also predicted a Martian invasion in 2007) but also where Longshot was conceived and born three years later. I'll never forget that day when the boss took me out to the balcony and explained to me about the recession and our duty to help strapped readers. "We need you to write a betting advice column." "Why me?" I replied, evoking that top pundit of yesteryear, Linda Martin. "Because no one else will do it for the money we are offering." Yet I sensed he could see something else in me too, some nas-



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THE LONGSHOT

cent ability to guide punters by the hand towards some of the best value that betting markets could offer. I would have asked him if that was really the reason, but by then I was alone on the balcony. Gazing out, I saw the whole city stretched before me, like some sort of weird lego experiment. I looked out on the northside, southside; then down the view we

have of Cork harbour from the tip of Morrison's Island. It was up to me to help those little dots that were moving around the Beautiful City. And if you have put thousands on some of my winning tips and only a few quid on the losing ones, then my friend, you are probably a millionaire. Of course, this building was more than just a series of excellent gambling tips. I brought a dog into the office three times: twice on purpose, once not. And who can forget the morning I brought All Bran to work instead of Bran Flakes and how confused I looked.

There was the boardwalk, outside, where we sunbathe on summer afternoons. Our friends outside the Simon Community, who were usually on hand with their Cork wit, which they would shout over at you with a glint in their eye. And what does Blackpool hold for us? Rooftop parking, brewery smells and much, much more I hope. As this is my last tip typed in the glasshouse on the quays, I've put in some extra, extra effort. Here goes. **Recommendation:** Stoke, Everton, Chelsea and Swansea at 7/1 with Paddy Power. Here we come Blackpool!