How to bet on Snooker

The Basics of Betting on Snooker

A game based on 15 red balls and six colours, it's surprising how magnificent this game can be at times at a range of different tournaments throughout the year. 46 events have been scheduled for the professionals for the last two seasons with them consisting of ranking, non-ranking and variant tournaments. The pinnacle of the season builds up to the World Championships, while the other 'Big Three' majors consist of both the UK Championship and Masters. The World Snooker Tour consists of a standard field of 128 professional players and these places must be earnt through their performances in the previous season or through qualifiers and it's these players that we want to learn about and make our money off.

The Markets & Betting

Tournament: *Outright Tournament, To Reach the Final, Winning Quarter*

The majority of the tour competitions will have a draw and distribute the ranked players like you would in other sports like tennis and darts. It's then a knockout until the final and a winner is crowned champion. It's these draws where different factors can contribute to finding a value bet and therefore making money on the sport over a longer period of time.

First and foremost, it's important to note that it can be useful to learn the principles of betting on snooker at the big tournaments first like the World Championships, but if you want to make a profit then it'll be in your interest to avoid these. Indeed, very few underdogs are victorious on the biggest stage and especially so at the World Champs with only three players lifting the title outside the top 10 seeds since 2000, two of which came back in 2005 and 2006, while the only other was Ronnie O'Sullivan in 2012 when claiming his fourth title.

The key components we look for is the draw, player form, any weak seeds to take on and finally any one-sided head-to-head that could see an unlikely player emerge deep into a tournament or go onto win it.

Monitoring the outright market should start after the draw has been made as there can be huge fluctuations should any top unseeded players upset the balance of the draw, or form players for that matter. We start by splitting up the draw into four quarters and identify any difficult or easy sections which should be avoided or exploited. For example, if one quarter has four of the top 10 in the

market then it may be worth avoiding while that would also suggest there are much easier paths elsewhere.

Once we have identified that we can then couple this with the form of the players. Indeed, we use the snooker database/cuetracker to find any players oozing with confidence and as a consequence is likely to have a better chance than the majority of the field and tasting success and by contrast, any players making silly mistakes or on a succession of defeats are likely to struggle. It's the latter we want to look out for to take on, whilst finding the former with a relatively easy draw will more often than not result in you finding a value bet.

Match: *1X2, Handicap, Total Frames*

The 1X2 markets are the most common market when it comes to individual matches. We like to use this after we've assessed a tournament draw in detail and so we can easily identify where some value we believe may lie across a number of early round matches and therefore hopefully return a nice profit. In fact, this can also be used for getting behind any in form long shots that you might not think can go the whole way but still might have a fighting chance in their early rounds.

The handicap mark is a way for putting players on a level playing field. Indeed, take a top 10 player going up against a player outside the top 50 in a best of 11 frames match and you'd expect the handicap to be around 2.5 - 3.5 frames in favour of the underdog. Indeed, this allows a betting opportunity on every individual game and allows even the top players in the world who're normally at very short 1X2 prices to be punted on. For example, Mark Selby is a prime candidate for this market as at the World Championships although he won the tournament in three of his four attempts between 2013 and 2017, 12 of his 16 matches over that period saw fewer than six frames separate him to his opponents, meaning he rarely ran away with it and so taking him on in the handicap would've returned a profit.

The total frames market is usually based around a bookmaker offering you a set mark for the overall frames throughout the match to go under or over. Evenly matched players facing one another are obviously more likely to go the distance, as will players who're consistently involved in tight long affairs, so look out for them n this market.

Value

As continuously mentioned above value is the aim of the game. Over a long period of time if you consistently find this then you're going to be making a profit and so below is a breakdown of how to know you're betting on the right numbers.

$$Value = (Your\ Probablity \times Decimal\ Odds) - 1$$

If we take Judd Trump for the upcoming World Championships in 2020, we can see that he's a short priced favourite at 3.5. Following our analysis of the tournament and statistics (excluding the draw as we don't have that which wouldn't be the case in an ideal world) we give him a 35% chance of defending his title.

Therefore, $Value = (0.35 \times 3.5) - 1 = 0.23$

If the value is great than zero we have a value bet. In this instance, a predicted value of 23% (0.23 x 100) is found. This can also be applied to individual matches applying the same theory.