

The par 4s that
measure 459 yards



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The third major of the year is upon us this week as the best of the PGA Tour meet the best of the European Tour to determine this year's British Open champion. This year's tournament will be played on the medal course at Carnoustie in Scotland. Carnoustie has long been regarded as one of the hardest courses on the open rotation. The course measures 7,361 yards from the back tees and if the wind blows some holes may prove to be close to impossible.

The back nine is particularly tricky. The 16th hole is a par 3 that measures 240 yards. If the wind blows however, the par 3 will play more like a par 4 and will require two shots to get home instead of one. In the 1968 Open Jack Nicklaus called the whole a tricky little par 4.

On the back nine there are five par 4s that measure 459 yards or longer. If the wind blows with any amount of force many of these holes will become inaccessible in two shots. In the previous British Opens that have been played at Carnoustie a variable who's who of golf have emerged as winners. The best in the game have always won at Carnoustie. Hogan captured the third leg of his Triple Crown here in 1953. Gary Player beat Jack Nicklaus in a legendary duel in 1968 and Tom Watson captured the first of his five Open wins here in 1975.

What does this tell us about this year's Open? Look hard at the favorite. With a number of golfers playing so well going into the Open making a decision on who to pick can be very tricky. Carnoustie is a long golf course so length will be very important, especially if the wind picks up. Also the ability to keep the ball low under the wind is an attribute you will find in every player who has

ever won the open, its absolutely necessary. Defining these characteristics in individual golf games may be hard to do.

But if Carnoustie continues the tradition of providing world class winners it might help us determine who to pick. The obvious choice of favorite falls on a man who has won three of his last four starts, Tiger Woods. Woods game is hitting on all cylinders at the most crucial time of the year.

Had his putter not slipped on the back nine at Pinehurst Woods would have gone four for four. His recent good play has driven down the odds however, and you will be lucky to get him at 8/1. Most properties have him at around 6/1. Another man who has been playing flawless golf of late is Vijay Singh. He has the all around game to win an open.

His consistent play has him perched and ready to claim another major. Look for Singh at 10/1. Another player who appears to have his game in order going in to this week is Colin Montgomerie.

Montgomerie hails from Scotland and grew up playing the open courses. With his win at last weeks Loch Loman tournament it appears the Montgomerie has his game ready. Montgomerie should be posted somewhere near 20/1. The fourth man who stands a good chance this week is Englishman Lee Westwood. Westwood appears to be over the shoulder injury that has kept him back most of the year. He played well at last weeks Loch Loman tournament and seems poised to win his first major.

Hes long, proven a number of times that he can get the job done under harsh circumstances, and he can play well under pressure. At 20/1 it could

be like stealing. The fifth and final player that could be a serious threat is Irishman Darren Clarke. Like all the other picks hes long, and can keep it under the wind.

Clarke finished tied for seventh in the U. S. Open and has played well in the weeks leading up to the British. Like Westwood hes ready to take his game to the next level and the British Open could be his best chance to do so.

Look for Clarke around 30/1. With so many players who have a great shot to win the British Open, youre best