

GRAHAM SHARPE

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**GREAT
GAMBLING
TIPS**



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The Gentleman's Guide to Calculating Winning Bets

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GRAHAM SHARPE

HIGH STAKES

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DEDICATION

- ◆ To those extraordinarily helpful people who went out of their way to answer my request for their favourite betting tips and strategies by sitting down and writing them down for me to pass onto you.
- ◆ To everyone who was generous enough to permit me to borrow their expertise from material they had already created.
- ◆ To anyone whose work I have deemed worthy of inclusion here but been unable to contact for official permission. I have nonetheless fully credited the source.
- ◆ To all the gamblers out there sufficiently intrigued by the subject to want to take advantage of expertise accumulated over years of bitter battle with the bookies and revealed here for their delight, edification and, perhaps, enrichment.
- ◆ To Ion Mills of High Stakes Publishing for recognising a great idea when it was pitched to him – and getting it for peanuts!

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INTRODUCTION

BY GRAHAM SHARPE, WILLIAM HILL
MEDIA RELATIONS DIRECTOR

I don't have the necessary bottle to be a big-time gambler, but I do like a bet and I know that over a period of time the most profitable wagers I have ever struck were when I deliberately decided to go against prevailing opinion and media pressure. As I write this book the strategy has paid off big time on three recent separate occasions, each of which demonstrate how this – well, it isn't a system, but almost a philosophy – works.

Towards the end of 2007, hints began to emerge that the new prime minister, Gordon Brown, was strongly tempted to hold a snap general election to endorse his

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position. The hints, and no one seemed quite sure where they were coming from, became more and more strident. Money began to be placed on an election before the end of the year, and as the speculation and media spin took hold, so the odds tumbled to the point where it was possible to get odds of up to 11/4 that there would be no election.

I sat and watched and listened, and, of course, distributed the odds to the media. Political specialists I talked to told me that they had it on good authority that the election would happen. My naive questions about why a dour, cautious Scot, who had waited a decade to get the one job at which he had aimed his entire career, would now jeopardise the whole thing within weeks of taking it on were brushed aside. But Brown had no need to go for maybe three years. I could not see why he needed to make a decision to go to the country and with that risk losing what he had only just acquired. I advised anyone likely to listen to me to bet against it happening.

Then, again just before the end of the year, unbeaten popular boxer Ricky Hatton went to Las Vegas to take on Floyd Mayweather – universally regarded as the best pound-for-pound boxer in the world, even by those who did not like his lifestyle or attitude. Before the fight most boxing observers had advised Ricky not to take on the task and speculated that he would be up to a 3/1 outsider. By fight time, with patriotic fervour, media hype and pure optimism kicking in, Hatton's odds had shrunk

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and Mayweather was available at odds as long as 8/13. He won like a 1/5 shot.

And then along came the sacking of Newcastle boss Sam Allardyce. Up went the list of odds about who would succeed him. Harry Redknapp was not even included in most lists or, if he was, he was out with the washing at 25/1. Yet within hours he was odds-on favourite. Why? Well, perhaps people knew that original favourite Alan Shearer was not a prime target for club officials, who might want someone with experience. Okay, even if that were the case there were plenty of other candidates with better credentials than Harry. But as the deluge of cash continued it became evident that the move for Harry was coming from the Newcastle end, for whatever reason.

Now, Harry is no fool. He is expert at keeping his profile very high and he knows full well what he is worth and how to keep that value at its optimum. But by now he was a 1/8 chance.

Again, I wondered why a man who had never ventured much further north than Essex during his management career, who owns valuable property on perhaps the most sought-after part of the south coast, should want to uproot his family to move to the North East? And at a time when his own club was going along better than a club whose history over the past half a century has been tempestuous and seen off a whole string of bosses, all of whom left without enhancing their own reputations or the club's

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fortunes. Had I been so inclined I would have started laying Redknapp with the betting exchanges.

Not every bandwagon sees its wheels shear off from under it, but I am in no doubt that selectively opposing popular opinion can ultimately lead to financial enrichment. So, this is my main contribution to the *1,001 Great Gambling Tips* you will find in the following pages.

If any one of them was completely infallible there would be no bookmakers left in business. Of course, they are not. And in some cases what one source regards as a great tip, another will regard as something to be avoided at all costs.

Nonetheless, it is fascinating and instructive to read the opinions and strategies of the many well-informed betting brains I have persuaded to contribute, and the varied sources I have delved into to locate relevant opinions. There may be a little bit of overlap in what they say, but if similar themes appear more than once it only emphasises the likelihood that the advice is strong.

One of the great appeals of betting is that it not only offers the prospect of financial improvement, but also enhances the process of watching any sporting contest. Never forget that the ultimate realistic aim for most gamblers is not to lose too much, rather than to make a profit, and you will continue to enjoy and appreciate the wonder of wagers without ending up skint.

Graham Sharpe