

Six Nations Popularity Begins to Challenge Premier League Football

Submitted by: Moneta Communications

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The perfect winter warmer is again upon us in the form of the RBS Six Nations (<http://www.6nationsrugby.net>) Rugby Championships which begins at Twickenham on Saturday afternoon when England take on Italy (<http://www.6nationsrugby.net/2009/england-v-italy.php>), with rugby fast catching football as the most popular winter team sport. It is the first of fifteen matches that concludes on the 15th March which decide effectively the best team in the Northern Hemisphere.

Current Grand Slam Champions Wales are favourites best priced at 2/1 with Bet365 (<http://www.betting-directory.com/bookmaker-bet365.php>) to regain the championship again but they will know that they will have to overcome strong challenges from all their rivals before they can claim the title. They begin with a very tough match against Scotland at Murrayfield, a venue they have only won once at in their last four visits. Coach Warren Gatland however remains positive ahead of the match and is pleased that he has a full squad of players to select from. He is particularly happy to welcome back Gavin Henson back to the fold after injury kept him out of the autumn internationals.

Scotland however will be no pushovers, they have recruited former British Lion, Gregor Townsend into the fold as backs coach and he appears to have made a big impression on the team and has most certainly boosted the confidence of a team who found it difficult to score tries last season.

The 6 Nations Betting (<http://www.betting-directory.com/sport/six-nations-betting.php>) suggests that England should have little difficulty in winning their match against Italy, but it will be the manner of their performance that will command the thoughts of their army of media critics. Manager, Martin Johnson, will clearly want an improved effort from his players following their dismal performances against the southern hemisphere sides in the autumn. He has made several changes to the squad, some forced on him and others based on merit. A big win for England should see them go into their big match against Wales at the Millennium Stadium the following week full of optimism.

The third match takes place on Sunday at Croke Park in Dublin when the Irish, under new coach, Declan Kidney, take on the might of France. On paper this match could go either way, but Ireland with home advantage and an excellent win against Argentina in the autumn may just have the edge and could easily be the team most likely to challenge Wales for the championship.

Whatever the outcomes, it will be enthralling viewing for the millions of fans who can avail of Free Bets (<http://www.betting-directory.com/>) for all the Six Nations action from the top UK Online Bookmakers.

Mark Cohen
01202 708048