

WORLD CUP 2026

The Complete Market Guide

48 Teams · 10,000 Simulations · Data-Driven Market Edges

Golden Boot Projections · Value Plays · 72 Match Breakdowns · 48 Team Profiles

By The 7 Oracles · PredictionMarketsPicks.com

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World Cup 2026: The Complete Market Guide

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Rosters reflect the official final 26-man squads submitted June 1, 2026. Projections and market prices current as of June 8, 2026. Monte Carlo simulation: 10,000 iterations.

For live analysis during the tournament, visit predictionmarketspicks.com/world-cup

How to Use This Guide & Methodology

Every projection in this guide comes from a Monte Carlo simulation of the full tournament, run 10,000 times. Each iteration plays all 104 matches using team strength ratings anchored to market-implied probabilities, then tracks who advances, who wins it, and which players score.

The **player profiles** name each nation's real role-holders from their official final squad — penalty taker, free-kick taker, lead striker, shot creators, and aerial targets. The **Golden Boot** table attributes goals to players by their share of their team's scoring output, with a structural boost for penalty takers. **Match breakdowns** give model win/draw/loss splits and the single best value play per fixture.

Read the percentages as the model's view, and the "market edge" notes as where that view diverges from the prices. Always confirm the team sheet before kickoff — managers rotate.

Tournament Outright & Group-Win Probabilities – All 48 Teams

Sorted by outright price (American odds). Group-win % is the model's probability of topping the group.

TEAM	GRP	OUTRIGHT	WIN GRP
Spain	H	+400	40.6%
England	L	+550	39%
France	I	+700	37.8%
Brazil	C	+800	38.5%
Argentina	J	+800	37.5%
Germany	E	+900	35.5%
Netherlands	F	+1200	33.3%
Portugal	K	+1400	37.5%
Morocco	C	+2000	35%
Belgium	G	+2000	33.5%
Canada	B	+2500	24.5%
Croatia	L	+2500	34.1%
Japan	F	+3000	22.7%
Mexico	A	+3500	32.2%
Switzerland	B	+4000	32%
United States	D	+5000	28.2%
Côte d'Ivoire	E	+5000	26.5%
Uruguay	H	+5000	36.5%
Colombia	K	+5000	33.8%
Korea Republic	A	+6000	22.5%
Ecuador	E	+6000	27.3%
Senegal	I	+6000	27.6%
Norway	I	+8000	16%
Türkiye	D	+8000	17.7%
Australia	D	+10000	19.1%
Paraguay	D	+12000	7.9%

TEAM	GRP	OUTRIGHT	WIN GRP
Sweden	F	+12000	8.8%
South Africa	A	+15000	5.8%
Scotland	C	+20000	9.8%
Iran	G	+20000	21.4%
Austria	J	+20000	17.8%
Bosnia & Herzegovina	B	+20000	9.4%
Qatar	B	+25000	8.3%
Ghana	L	+25000	5.4%
Czechia	A	+25000	14%
Tunisia	F	+30000	9.1%
Algeria	J	+30000	15.9%
Egypt	G	+35000	19.2%
Saudi Arabia	H	+40000	5%
Uzbekistan	K	+40000	4.4%
Haiti	C	+50000	0.7%
Panama	L	+50000	2.5%
Iraq	I	+50000	0.7%
Cape Verde	H	+60000	1.1%
Jordan	J	+75000	3.7%
DR Congo	K	+75000	4.4%
New Zealand	G	+80000	3.1%
Curaçao	E	+100000	0.1%

Golden Boot Projections — Top 24

Expected goals accumulated across the three group-stage matches; players on teams that advance add to these totals in the knockouts. PK = primary penalty taker.

#	PLAYER	TEAM	AVG GLS	G/GAME	PK	GB %
1	Kylian Mbappe	France	2.97	0.596	✓	10.8%
2	Harry Kane	England	2.7	0.524	✓	8.2%
3	Erling Haaland	Norway	2.48	0.6	✓	6.6%
4	Vinicius Jr	Brazil	2.44	0.498	✓	6.2%
5	Lautaro Martinez	Argentina	2.32	0.471	—	5.4%
6	Mikel Oyarzabal	Spain	2.2	0.409	✓	4.1%
7	Cristiano Ronaldo	Portugal	2.18	0.47	✓	4.1%
8	Cody Gakpo	Netherlands	2.12	0.451	✓	3.7%
9	Son Heung-min	Korea Republic	2.11	0.496	✓	3.7%
10	Romelu Lukaku	Belgium	2.1	0.462	✓	3.5%
11	Kai Havertz	Germany	2	0.412	✓	3.2%
12	Jonathan David	Canada	1.97	0.444	✓	3.1%
13	Ayoub El Kaabi	Morocco	1.93	0.437	—	3.1%
14	Santiago Gimenez	Mexico	1.93	0.441	✓	2.7%
15	Christian Pulisic	United States	1.84	0.429	✓	2.5%
16	Lamine Yamal	Spain	1.78	0.33	—	2.1%
17	Florian Wirtz	Germany	1.76	0.364	—	2.2%
18	Breel Embolo	Switzerland	1.74	0.404	—	2.2%
19	Andrej Kramaric	Croatia	1.71	0.395	✓	2%
20	Luis Diaz	Colombia	1.67	0.393	—	1.8%
21	Darwin Nunez	Uruguay	1.67	0.402	✓	2%
22	Bukayo Saka	England	1.66	0.322	—	1.7%
23	Lionel Messi	Argentina	1.5	0.304	✓	0.9%

#	PLAYER	TEAM	AVG GLS	G/GAME	PK	GB %
24	Dani Olmo	Spain	1.49	0.277	—	0.9%

Group-Stage Team Profiles



Group A

Mexico, Korea Republic, South Africa, Czechia

Mexico

Group A · Outright +3500 · Win Grp 32.2%

OVERVIEW

El Tri under Javier Aguirre plays a compact 4-3-3 that defends deep and counters with pace. Santiago Giménez is the focal point up front — one of the most prolific young strikers in Europe. Organized defensively, dangerous on transitions and set pieces. Home advantage in Group A (Guadalajara) is significant.

TOP SCORERS

- **Santiago Giménez** (22) — AC Milan (transferred from Feyenoord, Feb 2025). Best striker Mexico has had in a decade. Struggling to adapt to Serie A (1 goal in 11 apps). Currently sidelined with ankle injury — his fitness heading into the WC is the biggest question mark for El Tri.
- **Alexis Vega** (14) — Club América. Pace on the left, pressing, dangerous in space.
- **Orbelín Pineda** (11) — AEK Athens. Technical midfielder who contributes goals from distance.

SET PIECES

PK: Santiago Giménez · **FK:** Orbelín Pineda · **Corners:** Alexis Vega (delivery) / Santiago Giménez (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Santiago Giménez** *Striker* — AC Milan. Premier target when fit. All attacks run through him. Ankle injury is a concern — monitor his availability through the club season.
- **Edson Álvarez** *Defensive CM* — West Ham. Shields the back four. Rarely injured. Leader.
- **Alexis Vega** *Left wing* — Speed and crossing. Creates chances on counter-attacks.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Santiago Giménez** — Strong in the air for a striker. Scores on crosses and corners.
- **César Montes** — Espanyol CB. Physical presence on set pieces from both ends.

TACTICAL READ

Mexico is a classic tournament underdog play — not because they're good enough to win it, but because they play above their odds in group stages. Aguirre's system is defensively solid. In 2022 they finished third in the group but were eliminated on goal difference — a freak result. In 2026 they play Group A with South Africa, Korea Republic, and Czechia. The draw is soft. Expect Mexico to advance and play well into the R16. The value is not in outright odds — it's in group stage unders and Santiago Giménez scorer props (if fit).

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Mexico under 2.5 goals in group matches vs. South Africa and Korea Republic. Aguirre parks the bus against any team that pushes. Low-scoring by design. *Mexico under in group play has hit consistently under Aguirre's tactical setups.*

MEDIUM Santiago Giménez anytime scorer — IF FIT. He's the entire Mexico offense. But he's nursing an ankle injury at Milan (1 goal in 11 apps). Confirm his health before betting. *Downgraded from high until he shows match fitness. If he's healthy going in, any odds above +130 is value.*

LOW Mexico to advance from Group A is priced fairly. No strong edge but don't fade them — the draw is too soft. *Better value in individual match props than group advancement markets.*

Korea Republic

Group A · Outright +6000 · Win Grp 22.5%

OVERVIEW

Hong Myung-bo's Korea play a technical 4-3-3 built around Son Heung-min's genius. 11th consecutive World Cup — remarkable consistency for Asian football. Son is the biggest star in Asian football. Lee Kang-in at PSG adds a second creative dimension. Organized defensively, dangerous on transitions. Totals: NEUTRAL.

TOP SCORERS

- **Son Heung-min** (48) — Tottenham Hotspur captain. Korea's all-time top scorer (48 goals). Takes PKs. World-class in every sense.
- **Lee Kang-in** (8) — PSG. Creative playmaker. Technical, dribbles, creates. The No. 10 dimension beside Son.
- **Hwang Hee-chan** (12) — Wolverhampton. Pacy wide forward. Physical in the Premier League. High-pressing press trigger.

SET PIECES

PK: Son Heung-min · **FK:** Son Heung-min · **Corners:** Lee Kang-in (delivery) / Kim Min-jae (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Son Heung-min** *Left wing / Second striker* — Tottenham captain. Creates and finishes at the highest level. 20+ PL goals per season. PK taker. The whole offense.
- **Lee Kang-in** *No. 10 / Right wing* — PSG. Ball carrier, dribbler, through-ball passer. Korea's Plan B when Son is marked out.
- **Hwang In-beom** *Central CM* — Covers ground relentlessly. Pressing and transitional play.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Kim Min-jae** — Bayern Munich CB. 6'2". Pushes up on set pieces. Physical monster. Has scored crucial international goals from corners.
- **Cho Gue-sung** — Scored 2 headers vs. Ghana in 2022 WC. Primary aerial target when he comes on.

TACTICAL READ

Korea Republic's tactical reality is simple: Son Heung-min (48 international goals, all-time record) and Kim Min-jae (top-3 CB in world football) are the anchors. When Son gets space, Korea scores. When the opponent parks a bus and takes away Son's left side, Korea struggles. Group A puts them against Mexico, South Africa, and Czechia. Mexico vs. Korea is the group's pivotal match. Korea has historically performed at World Cups — 11 consecutive tournaments, advanced from groups in 5 of their last 7. The 'Son's last World Cup' narrative makes this team dangerous. Manager Hong Myung-bo — the most-capped player in Korean history — brings credibility and tactical discipline.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Son Heung-min anytime scorer props in all three group matches are chronically underpriced. He's been a 20+ goal Premier League forward for 5 consecutive seasons and takes PKs. *Any odds above +180 on Son anytime scorer is +EV based on his historical output rate.*

HIGH Korea Republic to advance from Group A. Mexico is the only real threat. South Africa and Czechia are both beatable. Korea's quality is too high for this group. *Buy Korea to advance. The outright +6000 is also worth a small piece given Kim Min-jae's defensive dominance.*

MEDIUM Kim Min-jae aerial duel props on corners. He dominates in the air at both ends. Any market that allows you to bet on his aerial contributions is +EV. *Watch for corners-related props if available on Kalshi or Polymarket.*

South Africa

Group A · Outright +15000 · Win Grp 5.8%

OVERVIEW

Bafana Bafana under Hugo Broos have quietly become one of the most organized lower-ranked sides in world football. The 2023 AFCON bronze medal was no fluke — they defend in a compact 4-4-2, press in waves, and are lethal from set pieces. Oswin Appollis (Deportivo Alavés) is the standout — a wiry, explosive winger who causes problems at La Liga level. Themba Zwane (Mamelodi Sundowns) is the creative leader and the man who makes things happen in tight spaces, with teenager Relebohile Mofokeng emerging fast alongside him. South Africa drawing against Mexico and Korea Republic would be a massive overperformance. Totals: UNDER — they defend first, second, and third.

TOP SCORERS

- **Lyle Foster** (8) — Burnley. Bafana's first-choice striker — physical, holds the ball up, and the focal point of the attack. South Africa's main route to goal at this level.
- **Oswin Appollis** (8) — Deportivo Alavés. The exciting young winger proving himself in La Liga. Direct, pacey, and dangerous in transition — Broos' most effective attacking threat.
- **Relebohile Mofokeng** (6) — Mamelodi Sundowns. The breakout teenager — fearless, direct, and the most exciting creative talent South Africa have produced in years.

SET PIECES

PK: Oswin Appollis · **FK:** Teboho Mokoena / Oswin Appollis · **Corners:** Oswin Appollis / Teboho Mokoena (delivery) / Lyle Foster (aerial target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Themba Zwane** *Attacking midfielder* — Mamelodi Sundowns. The creative heartbeat of Bafana Bafana. Everything in the final third runs through his vision and link play.
- **Oswin Appollis** *Right winger* — Alavés. La Liga pace merchant who makes defenders backpedal. His ability to cut inside and shoot makes him a genuine threat even against good defenses.
- **Ronwen Williams** *Goalkeeper* — SuperSport United. Won the AFCON 2023 Golden Glove. World-class shot stopper who single-handedly kept South Africa in games. The most important player for totals — he keeps scores low.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Lyle Foster** — 6'1" striker. Aerial threat from crosses and set pieces. South Africa drill corner routines extensively — several AFCON goals from exactly this.
- **Nkosinathi Sibisi** — Orlando Pirates centre back. Attacks set pieces and is a physical aerial presence in both boxes.

TACTICAL READ

Broos has South Africa playing way above their ranking. The blueprint: defend your box, win second balls, hit Zwane on the half-turn, release Appollis in behind. Ronwen Williams in goal is the most important factor — he keeps clean sheets that change results. Group A has Mexico and Korea Republic — both favored, but this South Africa side will make it ugly. Neither match will be a blowout. The best angle is South Africa covering large handicaps, not winning outright. Under 2.5 in all three Group A games is the clearest play.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH South Africa Under 2.5 goals in every Group A game. Broos teams give up very few and score very little. Ronwen Williams is elite. These games will be 1-0, 0-1, 1-1 type scores. *AFCON 2023 saw South Africa play the lowest-scoring knockout football of any team. Group A opponents Mexico and Korea Republic also trend under.*

MEDIUM South Africa to cover +1.5 or +2 goal handicaps vs Mexico and Korea Republic. They are organized and disciplined — they do not get blown out. *Mexico trend: competitive but not dominant scorers. Broos defense limits big losses.*

MEDIUM Oswin Appollis anytime scorer at long odds (+400 or better). He plays La Liga, he is faster than anyone South Africa face in qualifying, and he gets chances. *Alavés starter in La Liga 2025/26. The step up to WC level is real but he is better than his odds imply.*

Czechia

Group A · Outright +25000 · Win Grp 14%

OVERVIEW

Czechia qualified via UEFA Playoff D, beating Denmark 2-2 (3-1 pens). Patrik Schick (Bayer Leverkusen) is their talisman — a world-class striker when fit, and the PK taker. Adam Hlozek (Hoffenheim) provides a younger, pacier option beside him. Czech football is organized and direct — counter-attacking with discipline. Group A draw — Mexico, Korea Republic, South Africa — gives them a genuine shot at advancement. Mexico are the group favorites but South Africa and Korea are both beatable. Totals: UNDER — Czech sides are structurally solid and don't concede cheaply.

TOP SCORERS

- **Patrik Schick** (26) — Bayer Leverkusen. PK taker. Top scorer in qualifying. Clinical finisher — his bicycle kick vs Scotland at Euro 2020 is one of the all-time goals. Injury-prone but lethal when fit.
- **Adam Hlozek** (12) — Hoffenheim (on loan from Leverkusen). Forward with 40+ caps at a young age. Pacey, technical, and versatile — can play left or right or through the middle.
- **Tomas Soucek** (11) — West Ham. Box-to-box midfielder who contributes goals from late runs. Physically dominant and a set piece threat.

SET PIECES

PK: Patrik Schick · **FK:** Patrik Schick / Tomas Holes · **Corners:** Tomas Holes (delivery) / Tomas Soucek, Vladimir Coufal (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Patrik Schick** *Striker* — Bayer Leverkusen. Clinical and technically elite when fit. The entire Czech attack is built around his movement and finishing. PK taker — any foul in the box is a dangerous moment.
- **Tomas Soucek** *Central midfielder* — West Ham. The engine of Czech midfield. Late arrivals into the box, headers from corners, and physical dominance in the middle third.
- **Adam Hlozek** — Forward. Hoffenheim. Pace on the counterattack. Creates chances with diagonal runs and draws defenders away from Schick.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Tomas Soucek** — 6'4". West Ham. One of the best aerial midfielders in the Premier League. Headers corners, wins duels, and scores from set pieces regularly.
- **David Zima** — Central defender. Physical and dangerous at set pieces from both ends.

TACTICAL READ

Czechia's ceiling is an R16 exit, which would be a success for this program. In Group A, if they beat South Africa and draw or beat Korea Republic, they advance. Mexico are the group leaders but don't face Czech in a must-win match. The key is Schick's fitness: a healthy Schick vs South Africa in Game 1 sets the tone. Czechia are mechanically sound, difficult to break down, and dangerous on set pieces through Soucek. A tight, hard-fought group exit is the realistic outcome — but their draw is favorable.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Patrik Schick anytime scorer vs South Africa. Schick is a PL/UCL-level striker facing a relatively weak South African defense. His movement and technique should create multiple chances. *Schick scored in both Czech Euro 2020 matches when fit. Against beatable opposition, he converts.*

MEDIUM Czechia under 2.5 goals in every group match. Czech sides under Miroslav Koubek are organized, compact, and disciplined. They don't blow teams out. *Czech qualifying record: 20 GF, 18 GA in 14 games. Tight margins in most results.*

LOW Czechia to advance from Group A as a speculative unit. The draw is soft. 62.8% simulated group advancement rate. *South Africa and Korea Republic are both beatable. Mexico are the group favorites and unlikely to be stopped.*



Group B

Canada, Switzerland, Qatar, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Canada

Group B · Outright +2500 · Win Grp 24.5%

OVERVIEW

Canada field arguably their strongest squad ever as co-hosts. Jesse Marsch plays a direct 4-4-2 / 4-3-3 built on pressing intensity. Alphonso Davies is world-class at LB. Jonathan David is one of the most clinical strikers in Europe — 30+ goals in Ligue 1. Home crowd advantage in Toronto and Vancouver is massive. Totals Bias: NEUTRAL.

TOP SCORERS

- **Jonathan David** (30) — Lille (LOSC). Canada's all-time top scorer. One of Europe's most prolific strikers. Clinical finisher. Takes PKs.
- **Cyle Larin** (29) — Real Valladolid. Physical presence up front. Experienced in CONCACAF. Strong in the air.
- **Alphonso Davies** (15) — Bayern Munich. World-class LB who attacks constantly. Pace weapon and direct assist machine.
- **Tajon Buchanan** (12) — Inter Milan. Right wing. Speed, directness, improving end product.

SET PIECES

PK: Jonathan David · **FK:** Jonathan David · **Corners:** Stephen Eustáquio / Alphonso Davies (delivery) / Cyle Larin (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Alphonso Davies** *Left back / Left wing* — Bayern Munich. Best left back in the world. Drives forward constantly. Direct assist machine.
- **Jonathan David** *Striker* — The finisher. Everything funnels through him in the final third.
- **Stephen Eustáquio** *Central CM* — Porto. Engine of the midfield. Carries, distributes, gets forward.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Cyle Larin** — Real Valladolid. Physical striker. Strong in the air. Primary aerial target on set pieces.
- **Moïse Bombito** — OGC Nice CB. Athletic, powerful, and attacks set pieces. A genuine aerial threat in the opposition box.

TACTICAL READ

Canada's blueprint is straightforward: Davies terrorizes defenses on the left, David finishes. The supporting cast (Buchanan, Eustáquio, Ismaël Koné) has developed into genuine international quality. Playing home crowds in Group B is a significant factor — the Canadian fanbase will be electric. The risk is depth: if Davies or David is unavailable, the quality drops fast. Group B opponents Switzerland, Qatar, and Bosnia and Herzegovina are all beatable. Canada should advance — the question is whether they can make noise in the knockout rounds. Base rate for co-hosts advancing from groups: historically strong. This is Canada's moment.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Canada to advance from Group B is underpriced. Switzerland is the only real threat in this group. Qatar is outmatched. Co-host crowd advantage is significant. *Buy Canada to advance. Group winner odds are even better value.*

HIGH Jonathan David anytime scorer in all three group matches. He scores in everything — club, qualifying, friendlies. Any odds above +160 is +EV. *David is arguably the most underpriced scorer prop in the tournament. Most casual bettors don't know who he is.*

MEDIUM Canada over 2.5 goals vs. Qatar. Canada presses relentlessly and Qatar's defense is porous at this level. This should be a blowout. *Check line movement. If Canada is installed as -2.5 or bigger, take the over instead.*

Switzerland

Group B · Outright +4000 · Win Grp 32%

OVERVIEW

Murat Yakin's Switzerland play a disciplined 3-4-3 / 3-4-2-1 that is greater than the sum of its parts. Granit Xhaka is the heartbeat of everything. Always competitive — QF in Euro 2020 (beat France on PKs), R16 in 2022. This team maximizes its talent in every tournament. Totals Bias: UNDER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Breel Embolo** (12) — Monaco. Physical striker. Scores in big games. Clinical target man.
- **Ruben Vargas** (8) — Augsburg. Left wing. Pace and crossing. Key creative outlet on the flank.
- **Dan Ndoye** (6) — Bologna. Right wing. Breakout at Euro 2024. Fast, direct, improving end product.

SET PIECES

PK: Granit Xhaka · **FK:** Granit Xhaka · **Corners:** Granit Xhaka / Ruben Vargas (delivery) / Breel Embolo (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Granit Xhaka** *Defensive CM / Captain* — Bayer Leverkusen. Runs the entire Swiss system. Distributes, sets the tempo, takes all set pieces.
- **Breel Embolo** *Striker* — Monaco. Physical, scores in big moments. Focal point of Swiss attacks.
- **Ruben Vargas** *Left wing* — The primary wide outlet. Pace and delivery from the left side.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Breel Embolo** — Physical striker. Wins headers in the box. Primary target on corners.
- **Manuel Akanji** — Man City CB. Pushes up on set pieces. Experienced aerial presence.

TACTICAL READ

Switzerland are the ultimate 'solid' tournament team. Never favorites, always competitive. Xhaka runs everything from midfield. The defensive 3-back system is well-drilled and hard to break down. Group B with Canada, Qatar, and Bosnia and Herzegovina should see them advance — the only real threat is Canada. Key question: can they beat a top-6 team in the knockouts? History says yes (beat France at Euro 2020 on PKs). Market edge: Switzerland to advance from group is reliably underpriced in every tournament. The under in Switzerland matches is a consistent play.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Switzerland under 2.5 goals in group matches. Yakin's system is built to grind and counter. They rarely play open games even against weaker opposition. *Switzerland under has been a reliable play across Euro 2020, WC 2022, and Euro 2024.*

HIGH Switzerland to advance from Group B is underpriced vs. public perception. They're better than their odds suggest — they always are. *Buy to advance. Outright is too long but to advance is value in every tournament.*

MEDIUM Granit Xhaka shot on target props. He shoots from distance regularly and takes all set pieces. High-volume player at an underrated price. *Any Xhaka shooting prop above +200 is worth considering given his volume.*

Qatar

Group B · Outright +25000 · Win Grp 8.3%

OVERVIEW

Qatar are the hosts of the last World Cup (2022) and they return as co-host nation in 2026, qualifying automatically. Under Julen Lopetegui, they have undergone a tactical overhaul — from the tiki-taka-lite style of 2022 to a more direct, counter-pressing system. Akram Afif (Al-Sadd) is the best player in the AFC, a technically gifted winger who creates and scores. Almoez Ali (Al-Duhail) is the all-time AFC top scorer — powerful, smart, and clinical in the box. Group B with Canada and Switzerland is steep. Qatar will target a point, not a win. Totals: UNDER — every Lopetegui team defends first.

TOP SCORERS

- **Almoez Ali** (42) — Al-Duhail. All-time AFC Champions League top scorer. 2019 Asian Cup Golden Boot winner with 9 goals. At 29, this is his prime. Physical, aerial, two-footed — the complete striker.
- **Akram Afif** (28) — Al-Sadd. 2023 AFC Player of the Year. Technically outstanding, plays with European intelligence and dribbling quality. The No. 10 who makes Qatar dangerous.
- **Edmilson Junior** (8) — Belgian-born attacking midfielder. Technical creator who adds a different gear behind Afif and runs in behind on the counter.

SET PIECES

PK: Akram Afif · **FK:** Akram Afif · **Corners:** Akram Afif (delivery) / Almoez Ali, Boualem Khoukhi (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Akram Afif** *Attacking midfielder / Left winger* — Al-Sadd. Three-time Qatar Stars League best player. Quick, intelligent, and capable of creating something from nothing. He won the 2023 Asian Cup almost single-handedly.
- **Almoez Ali** *Centre forward* — Al-Duhail. The reference point in attack. His movement and finishing are the best Qatar have ever produced. Needs good service to be effective against top defenses.
- **Karim Boudiaf** *Defensive midfielder* — Veteran holding midfielder who reads the game well. Shields the back four effectively. Lopetegui's on-field organizer.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Almoez Ali** — 6'0". Exceptional in the air for a striker. Won the 2019 Asian Cup with dominant heading performances. At set pieces he is a real danger even against European defenses.
- **Boualem Khoukhi** — Al-Sadd. Veteran centre back who attacks corners and is a proven aerial scorer at set pieces for Qatar.

TACTICAL READ

Qatar in 2022 were the worst team at a World Cup since 1966 — finishing bottom of their home group without a point. Lopetegui has installed a defensive 4-2-3-1 that presses higher and transitions quicker. The honest analysis: Group B has Canada (WC contenders) and Switzerland (Euro regulars). Qatar will lose both games if they play their natural level. The only path to a point is tactical discipline, a strong performance from goalkeeper Meshaal Barsham, and Afif producing a moment of magic. Back Canada and Switzerland to qualify easily.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Qatar to be eliminated in the group stage. They were the worst team at WC 2022 as hosts. Group B has Canada and Switzerland — both clearly better. *Qatar to be eliminated is near certainty. The question is just which game they lose by more.*

MEDIUM Akram Afif anytime scorer vs the weaker Group B opponent. He is the one player who can produce against organized European defenses. Back him at +220 or better. *Afif won the 2023 Asian Cup almost alone with 4 goals in the knockout rounds. His quality is real even if Qatar's is not.*

MEDIUM Under 2.5 goals in Qatar vs Switzerland. Lopetegui teams and Swiss teams both defend well. This is a back-line-heavy, grind-it-out 1-0 or 0-0 type game. *Lopetegui: 58% of his Premier League games went under 2.5. Switzerland EURO 2024 went under in 3 of 5 games.*

Bosnia & Herzegovina

Group B · Outright +20000 · Win Grp 9.4%

OVERVIEW

Bosnia & Herzegovina qualified via UEFA Playoff A, beating Italy 1-1 then 4-1 on penalties in a stunning result. This is Edin Dzeko's final World Cup — the all-time leading scorer for his country now gets his stage. Ermedin Demirovic (VfB Stuttgart) provides a younger, more dynamic strike partner. Bosnia are a counter-punching team: defend deep, exploit space on transitions, and rely on individual quality. Group B — Canada, Switzerland, Qatar — is one of the most accessible in the draw. Qatar are there to be beaten; Switzerland and Canada are beatable. Totals: UNDER — Bosnia defend well and rely on individual moments.

TOP SCORERS

- **Edin Dzeko** (65) — Fenerbahce. Captain and all-time top scorer. PK taker. A living legend for this country. Physical, technically gifted, and still scoring in the Turkish Super Lig. This is his farewell World Cup.
- **Ermedin Demirovic** (14) — VfB Stuttgart. Main strike partner. Physical, direct, and productive in the Bundesliga. The future of Bosnian football.
- **Samed Baždarić** (6) — Partizan. Young, mobile forward who provides a third attacking option behind Džeko and Demirović.

SET PIECES

PK: Edin Dzeko · **FK:** Edin Dzeko / Benjamin Tahirović · **Corners:** Edin Dzeko / Nikola Katić (delivery and target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Edin Dzeko** *Striker* — Fenerbahce. The captain and main man. PK taker and set piece target. Commands the penalty box and is still effective at 40. Bosnia run everything through him.
- **Ermedin Demirovic** *Second striker* — VfB Stuttgart. Physical and direct. Creates his own shot opportunities with aggressive pressing and movement. Scored 15+ goals in Bundesliga.
- **Amir Hadžiahmetović** *Defensive midfielder* — Beşiktaş. Shields the back line, distributes, and allows the attack to function. Bosnia's midfield engine.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Edin Dzeko** — 6'2", dominant in the air. One of Europe's best header-of-the-ball strikers throughout his career. Still a menace at set pieces.
- **Nikola Katić** — Centre back. Athletic and physically imposing. Bosnia's main defensive aerial winner and set piece attacking option.

TACTICAL READ

Bosnia's upset of Italy (Euro 2024 qualifiers and now playoff) shows this squad can punch up. The system is clear: organize defensively, make it ugly, and rely on Dzeko's quality in moments of opportunity. In Group B, Qatar is the banked 3 points. Switzerland and Canada are real contests. Bosnia's qualifying record (7W 2D 5L) shows inconsistency — they can lose to weaker teams but beat strong ones. The wild card is: if Dzeko scores in Game 1 and Bosnia gets 3 points from Qatar, the pressure on their next two matches is manageable.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Bosnia vs Qatar — over 2.5 goals. Qatar are exposed against quality opposition. Dzeko and Demirovic will get chances. Bosnia have nothing to defend in this game. *Qatar conceded 3+ goals in 4 of their last 6 competitive matches vs European sides.*

MEDIUM Edin Dzeko to score in the tournament at any price. He's the PK taker, the captain, and this is his last World Cup. He will be motivated beyond measure. *Dzeko has scored in every major tournament he's played. A World Cup debut at 40 — the narrative matches the bet.*

LOW Bosnia group games under 2.5 goals in matches vs Switzerland and Canada. Both teams defend well and Bosnia will set up compactly against stronger opponents. *Bosnia are defensively solid. Switzerland and Canada are both organized. These match-ups will be tight.*



Group C

Brazil, Morocco, Scotland, Haiti

Brazil

Group C · Outright +800 · Win Grp 38.5%

OVERVIEW

Brazil 2026 is built around pace and pressing under Carlo Ancelotti — appointed May 2025, the first foreign manager in Brazil's history. Ancelotti runs the same flexible 4-4-2/4-3-3 system he uses at Real Madrid, with Vinícius Jr as the focal point. The squad depth is unmatched in the draw. Ancelotti's biggest contribution: finally getting the best players on the pitch together and trusting the attack.

TOP SCORERS

- **Vinícius Jr** (24) — Real Madrid. FIFA The Best 2024 winner, Ballon d'Or runner-up. Electric on the left. Takes PKs. The most dangerous player in the draw.
- **Matheus Cunha** (12) — Manchester United. Versatile forward — wide or central. Direct, powerful, and in the best form of his career.
- **Raphinha** (15) — Barcelona. Top scorer in the WCQ cycle. Assists machine, high shot volume.
- **Endrick** (9) — Real Madrid. 19 years old. Raw power and finishing. Next superstar.

SET PIECES

PK: Vinícius Jr · **FK:** Raphinha · **Corners:** Lucas Paquetá / Raphinha

SHOT CREATORS

- **Vinícius Jr** *Left wing* — Dribbles, cuts inside, PK taker. Defenders get booked just trying to mark him.
- **Lucas Paquetá** *No. 10* — West Ham. Deep playmaker. Distributes and runs channels. Cleared of match-fixing charges (July 2025).
- **Raphinha** *Right wing* — Barcelona. Assists machine. High shot volume from distance.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Marquinhos** — PSG captain. Bombs forward from CB on corners. Has 10+ NT goals from set pieces.
- **Gabriel Magalhães** — Arsenal CB. Physical, aerial monster. Dominant in both boxes.

TACTICAL READ

Brazil have the most complete squad in the tournament and now have the manager to match. Ancelotti's appointment ended Brazil's chronic coaching instability. His system — flexible, attack-minded, built around his best players — suits this squad perfectly. Casemiro (34, Man Utd departure confirmed Jan 2026) is recalled by Ancelotti but is likely a rotation/experience option, with Bruno Guimarães and Fabinho the legs in midfield. Group stage vs. Morocco, Scotland, Haiti is a free pass to the R16. The real test is the QF onward. Brazil at +800 has drifted slightly from their early line but the squad quality hasn't changed.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Brazil group stage clean sheet props are high-value. They've conceded only 14 goals in 18 WCQ matches. Morocco, Scotland, Haiti are all limited offensively. *Shop for Brazil -1.5 in group games vs. Haiti and Scotland. Clean sheet yes is +EV.*

HIGH Vinícius Jr anytime scorer props are consistently underpriced. He's scored in 7 of his last 10 competitive starts for Brazil. *Any odds above +350 on anytime scorer is EV positive based on his historical frequency.*

MEDIUM Brazil to win the tournament at +800 is fair value given squad depth and Ancelotti's track record in knockout football. *Hold for in-tournament live betting opportunities after they clear the QF.*

Morocco

Group C · Outright +2000 · Win Grp 35%

OVERVIEW

Morocco recently appointed Mohamed Ouahbi as head coach, replacing Walid Regragui (the 2022 WC semifinal hero). The coaching change 3 months before the tournament is a wildcard — but the squad is deep with European-based talent. Defensively organized, dangerous on transitions and set pieces. Hakimi is world-class at RB. The 2022 semifinal run was no fluke. Totals Bias: UNDER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Ayoub El Kaabi** (18) — Olympiacos. Target striker and 2024 AFCON top scorer. Physical, exceptional in the air. Leads the line and scores headers in big moments.
- **Soufiane Rahimi** (8) — Al-Ain. Pacy winger. Dangerous in transition. Breakout in the AFC Champions League.
- **Brahim Díaz** (6) — Real Madrid. Creative playmaker. Dribbles in tight spaces, links play. Eligible for Morocco after early Spain caps.

SET PIECES

PK: Brahim Díaz · **FK:** Achraf Hakimi / Azzedine Ounahi · **Corners:** Achraf Hakimi (delivery) / Ayoub El Kaabi, Nayef Aguerd (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Achraf Hakimi** *Right back / Wing back* — PSG. One of the best right backs in the world. Overlapping runs and crosses define the attack.
- **Bilal El Khannouss** *No. 10 / Right wing* — VfB Stuttgart. The creative spark — dribbles in tight spaces and creates chances from open play and set pieces.
- **Azzedine Ounahi** *Central CM* — Marseille. Box-to-box presence. Was a breakout star at the 2022 WC. Carries and distributes.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Ayoub El Kaabi** — 2024 AFCON top scorer. One of the best aerial strikers in the game — a constant threat on crosses and set pieces.
- **Nayef Aguerd** — Experienced centre back. Commanding in the air and a set-piece threat at both ends.

TACTICAL READ

Morocco's 2022 semi-final run changed how the world views African football. The key question for 2026 is whether the coaching change from Regragui to Ouahbi disrupts the system. Ouahbi inherits a talented squad but has limited time to implement his ideas. Hakimi at RB is world-class. The CB pairing of Aguerd and Chadi Riad is the foundation. Bilal El Khannouss provides the creative gear in midfield. Group C with Brazil, Scotland, and Haiti — Morocco vs. Brazil is the group match of the tournament. Scotland and Haiti are both winnable. Market edge: Morocco to advance from Group C is near-certain.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Morocco clean sheet vs. Scotland and Haiti. Morocco conceded 1 open-play goal in 7 matches at the 2022 WC. Scotland and Haiti don't have the firepower to break this defense. *Morocco clean sheet YES is strong value in both matches. Best as a same-game parlay anchor.*

HIGH Morocco under 2.5 goals in matches vs. Scotland and Haiti. Organized, conservative, counter-attacking — even against weaker opposition. *Morocco under has hit in 6 of their last 8 competitive matches.*

MEDIUM Ayoub El Kaabi anytime scorer. The 2024 AFCON top scorer leads the Morocco line and is lethal in the air — headed-shot and anytime-scorer props on set pieces are worth a look. *El Kaabi scored in every knockout round en route to the 2024 AFCON final. Hakimi's delivery makes him a real aerial threat.*

Scotland

Group C · Outright +20000 · Win Grp 9.8%

OVERVIEW

Steve Clarke's Scotland qualified for their first World Cup since France 1998 — a historic achievement in the expanded format. Scott McTominay (Napoli, 28) is the driving force: goals from midfield, physicality, and the ability to decide big moments. Andrew Robertson (Liverpool, 32) remains one of the world's best left backs. John McGinn (Aston Villa) provides energy and passing range. Che Adams is the forward option. Scotland are hard to beat, compact, and dangerous at set pieces. They won't embarrass themselves. Advancing from the group requires beating at least one higher-rated opponent. Totals: UNDER — Clarke builds teams to defend and grind.

TOP SCORERS

- **Scott McTominay** (16) — Napoli. Scotland's most important player. Goals from midfield, physical presence, set piece threat. The engine who transformed Scottish qualifying.
- **Che Adams** (16) — Southampton / elsewhere. Scotland's most natural goal-scorer. Pacey, mobile, and sharp in the box.
- **John McGinn** (11) — Aston Villa. Energy, passing, and goals from the No. 8 position. Scotland's most complete midfielder.
- **Ryan Christie** (9) — Bournemouth. Creative and two-footed. Scotland's best option in tight spaces to find a goal.

SET PIECES

PK: Scott McTominay · **FK:** John McGinn · **Corners:** Andrew Robertson / John McGinn (delivery) / Scott McTominay, Grant Hanley (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Scott McTominay** *Central midfielder* — Napoli. The most influential player. Drives forward, scores, presses, and battles. Scotland live and die by McTominay.
- **Andrew Robertson** *Left back* — Liverpool. Still world-class at 32. Overlapping runs, whipped crosses, and defensive reading. Scotland's best defensive player.
- **John McGinn** *Central midfielder* — Aston Villa. Box-to-box quality. Covers the ground, moves the ball quickly, and contributes goals and assists consistently.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Grant Hanley** — Norwich City CB. Scotland's main aerial threat at set pieces. Physical and aggressive. Scores from corners.
- **Scott McTominay** — 6'4". Dominant in the air from midfield. Scotland's best set piece weapon — corners designed to find him.

TACTICAL READ

Scotland punch above their weight because Clarke has instilled genuine belief and a defined playing style. The 4-3-3 presses with intensity, defends as a unit, and creates through Robertson's overlaps and McTominay's forward runs. The ceiling is limited — Scotland don't have world-class attacking talent after McTominay. Group C draw is the key variable. Against any team ranked outside the top 20, Scotland are competitive. Against a top-10 side, they're likely to lose but make it hard. McTominay is the match-winner: if he's on form in their easiest group game, Scotland could sneak a result that changes everything.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Scotland group games unders. Clarke's sides are organized and defensive. Scotland vs any 30+ ranked team will be sub-2.5 goals. Back the under in every Scotland group game. *Scotland conceded just 15 goals in 14 qualifying games. Clarke defends first, always.*

MEDIUM Scott McTominay to score in the tournament at +150 or better. He scored 11 goals in 35 Serie A appearances for Napoli. He scores in big moments — Euro 2024 he saved Scotland multiple times. *McTominay scored in Scotland's biggest qualifying games. The World Cup stage won't faze him.*

LOW Scotland to advance from the group as a speculative unit at +300 or better. They need to beat the weakest team in the group and get a draw against the second-weakest. Possible, not likely. *Scotland's organization and McTominay make them competitive against any team not in the world top 10.*

Haiti

Group C · Outright +50000 · Win Grp 0.7%

OVERVIEW

Haiti are making their second World Cup appearance (first was 1974) after winning the CONCACAF qualification playoff. Coach Sebastien Migne has installed a defensive 4-5-1 that is hard to break down but offers little going forward. Jean-Ricner Bellegarde (Crystal Palace) is the best player in Haitian football history — a technically gifted box-to-box midfielder who makes Oliver Glasner's Eagles tick. Duckens Nazon provides the pace threat on the counter. Group C with Brazil, Morocco, and Scotland is brutal — Haiti's realistic target is avoiding historic embarrassments and possibly stealing a point off Scotland. Totals: UNDER — Migne teams sit deep and make games ugly.

TOP SCORERS

- **Jean-Ricner Bellegarde** (14) — Crystal Palace. Born in Guadeloupe, Haiti international by choice. Premier League regular whose range of passing, press-resistance, and late runs into the box make him the only world-class player Haiti have. This is his breakout World Cup stage.
- **Duckens Nazon** (9) — PAOK (Greece). Mobile striker/winger who plays in behind. Pace is his weapon — given space he can punish, but he struggles against organized high lines.
- **Frantzy Pierrot** (8) — AEK Larnaca. Physical target striker who leads the line — Haiti's main aerial outlet and a genuine goal threat at set pieces.

SET PIECES

PK: Jean-Ricner Bellegarde · **FK:** Jean-Ricner Bellegarde · **Corners:** Jean-Ricner Bellegarde (delivery) / Frantzy Pierrot, Ricardo Adé (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Jean-Ricner Bellegarde** *Central midfielder* — Crystal Palace. The game runs entirely through him. His ability to receive under pressure and find dangerous passes is Premier League quality placed in a team 40 levels below him. Box-to-box dynamo who scores from late runs.
- **Duckens Nazon** *Second striker / Left winger* — PAOK. Lightning pace merchant who pins defenders back on the counter. Haiti's primary outlet on transitions. Give him a channel and he creates danger.
- **Carlens Arcus** *Right back* — Reliable and hardworking. One of the better defensively-disciplined fullbacks in CONCACAF. Keeps Haiti organized on that side.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Ricardo Adé** — Physical centre back, 6'2". Haiti's biggest body at set pieces. Targeted on corners and direct free kicks.
- **Duckens Nazon** — Less of an aerial threat but attacks short corners and flick-ons. Movement creates confusion in the box.

TACTICAL READ

Haiti are in survival mode in Group C. Brazil and Morocco are genuine title threats. Scotland are a fully professional European side. Migne will park the bus, give Bellegarde freedom to create, and hope for one set piece moment. The realistic scenario: three losses, 0 points, minimum 2-5 goals conceded total. The market overestimates how often massive underdogs score at World Cups. Haiti will keep it below 2 goals per game through sheer defensive effort. Bellegarde v Brazil is the matchup to watch — a Premier League midfielder on the biggest stage.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Under 2.5 goals Haiti vs Scotland. Scotland trends under, Haiti sits deep. Neither team will run up the score. Competitive physical game stays below 3 goals. *Scotland: 4 of 6 EURO 2024 qualifying games went under 2.5 against comparable opposition. Haiti will not open up.*

MEDIUM Haiti to not concede 4+ goals in any single group game. Migne's defense is genuinely organized. They will not be the punching bag that some weaker Asian/OFC teams are. *CONCACAF competition has raised Haiti's defensive standard. They are organized and hard to break down even against quality opposition.*

MEDIUM Jean-Ricner Bellegarde scored in 90+ minutes prop at +350 or better. He scores late from runs — Crystal Palace style is late arrivals into the box. Haiti will be defending all game and he arrives last. *Bellegarde scored 5 goals for Crystal Palace in 25/26, mostly second half. Haiti will be defending deep and he will run late.*



Group D

United States, Paraguay, Australia, Türkiye

United States

Group D · Outright +5000 · Win Grp 28.2%

OVERVIEW

High press, physically dominant midfield, direct in transition. More comfortable attacking on the counter than controlling possession. Set pieces are a genuine weapon. Home crowd in every group match is a real X factor — all group games on American soil.

TOP SCORERS

- **Christian Pulisic** (32) — AC Milan captain. 32 USMNT goals — fifth all-time. Takes PKs. Carries the attack.
- **Ricardo Pepi** (13) — PSV Eindhoven (Eredivisie). Primary striker. Clinical in the box. Returned from broken arm (broke it Jan 2026, returned Feb).
- **Folarin Balogun** (12) — AS Monaco. Dual national (chose USA). Physical presence up front. In strong form — 5 goals in his last 5 Ligue 1 appearances.

SET PIECES

PK: Christian Pulisic · **FK:** Christian Pulisic · **Corners:** Antonee Robinson / Tim Weah

SHOT CREATORS

- **Christian Pulisic** *Winger / No. 10* — Creates, finishes, takes PKs. The one-man attack when others go quiet.
- **Gio Reyna** *No. 10* — Injury-prone but elite when fit. Carries ball through pressure with ease.
- **Weston McKennie** *Box-to-box CM* — Gets into the box on set pieces. Underrated aerial threat from corners.
- **Brenden Aaronson** *Wide / Press* — Work rate and pressing engine. More assists than goals but creates space.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Chris Richards** — Crystal Palace centre back. Aerial threat who attacks set pieces — has scored headers at club level.
- **Weston McKennie** — Physical, dangerous in the 18-yard box on crosses. Gets forward regularly.

TACTICAL READ

USMNT under Mauricio Pochettino plays a compact 4-3-3 that transitions to 4-2-3-1 in possession. Best when pressing and exploiting space on the counter. Weakest when forced to break down a parked bus — lacks the creative midfield to unlock low blocks. The 2026 advantage: all group matches on American soil. Historical data says host nations advance from groups 85% of the time. This squad is better than the sum of its parts when the crowd is behind them.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH USA to advance from Group D is underpriced at current odds. Hosts advance 85% historically, and Paraguay and Australia are both beatable. *Current futures have USA too long vs. the base rate for host nations. Buy to advance.*

MEDIUM Pulisic anytime scorer props go over. He's scored in 60% of competitive starts over the last 18 months and takes PKs. *Watch for value vs. Paraguay in the opener. Opening match props are often mispriced.*

MEDIUM USA group match totals over 2.5 is +EV. They press high, allow transitions, and home crowds create end-to-end games. *Best applied to USA vs. Australia — both press-heavy, both attack-minded.*

Paraguay

Group D · Outright +12000 · Win Grp 7.9%

OVERVIEW

Paraguay under Gustavo Alfaro are compact, physical, and dangerous from dead balls — exactly the formula that punches above weight at World Cups. Miguel Almiron (Newcastle United) is the engine: pressing, passing, scoring from distance. Antonio Sanabria (Torino) is the old-school No. 9 who wins aerial duels and holds the line. Alfaro had Ecuador over-achieving at WC 2022 — he knows exactly how to get a mid-tier CONMEBOL side to perform. Group D with USA and Australia is wide open. Paraguay are legitimate second-place contenders and a push to the Round of 16. Totals: UNDER — Alfaro's systems are built to control and grind.

TOP SCORERS

- **Miguel Almiron** (24) — Newcastle United. The most underrated player at this World Cup. Almiron covered more ground per game than any midfielder in the Premier League in 2024/25. Goals, assists, pressing, long shots — he does everything.
- **Antonio Sanabria** (16) — Torino. Classic South American No. 9. Physical, aerial, technically decent. Scores from crosses and set pieces. Alfaro builds attacks around his hold-up play.
- **Ramón Sosa** (10) — Nottingham Forest. Energetic left winger who cuts inside. Broke out at Talleres in Argentina before moving to the Premier League. Direct and hard-working.

SET PIECES

PK: Miguel Almiron · **FK:** Miguel Almiron / Julio Enciso · **Corners:** Julio Enciso (delivery) / Antonio Sanabria, Gustavo Gómez (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Miguel Almiron** *Central midfielder / Second striker* — Newcastle United. 30 years old, peak World Cup age. Distance covered, press intensity, late runs into the box — Almiron is the complete midfielder. Every Newcastle fan saw it: he is world-class in this role.
- **Antonio Sanabria** *Centre forward* — Torino. Hold-up striker who makes Paraguay functional going forward. Wins aerial balls, links play, and scores when it counts. His relationship with Almiron off set pieces is practiced and dangerous.
- **Julio Enciso** *Right winger / No. 10* — Brighton. Technical creator who provides the final ball and shoots from range. Paraguay's most naturally gifted attacker.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Antonio Sanabria** — 6'1". The first target at every corner and free kick. Alfaro drilled set piece routines obsessively at Ecuador — expect the same here.
- **Gustavo Gómez** — AC Milan. Captain and defensive leader. Attacks corners at the back post. Has scored crucial headers for Paraguay in qualifying.

TACTICAL READ

Alfaro turned Ecuador into dark horses at WC 2022 by doing exactly this: compact shape, fast transitions, clinical finishing, set piece goals. Paraguay are better technically than that Ecuador side. Almiron at 30 is the best player Alfaro has ever had. Group D — USA have home support but are fallible in defense, Australia are direct and physical. Paraguay should win one game and draw another. The over/under on their games is one of the clearest bets: Alfaro teams play 1-0, 1-1, 2-1. Never 3-2 or 4-3.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Paraguay to advance from Group D at +200 or better. They are clearly the second-best team after USA. Australia are inferior in technical quality. Alfaro knows how to win at World Cups. *Alfaro took Ecuador from 3rd to 2nd place in Group A at WC 2022. Paraguay has better players than that Ecuador squad.*

MEDIUM Miguel Almiron to register 2+ assists in group stage at +180 or better. He creates from everywhere. In a three-game group, he creates 4-6 chances per game. The assists accumulate. *Almiron: 7 Premier League assists in 2024/25. He plays the same style at international level.*

MEDIUM Paraguay Under 2 goals conceded across the entire group stage. Alfaro's defense is organized and physical. Gustavo Gómez at centre-back is world class. *Alfaro: 7 of 12 CONMEBOL qualifiers allowed 1 or fewer goals. Paraguay defensive record in qualifying was best of the non-top-4 teams.*

Australia

Group D · Outright +10000 · Win Grp 19.1%

OVERVIEW

Tony Popovic's Socceroos play a compact 4-4-2 / 4-2-3-1 built on defensive discipline and counter-attacking pace. Consistently qualify but rarely advance past R16. The European-based contingent (Souttar, Irankunda) adds quality. Totals Bias: UNDER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Mathew Leckie** (14) — Melbourne City. Veteran forward and Australia's 2022 hero — scored the goal that beat Denmark to reach the R16. Pace and big-game pedigree.
- **Nestory Irankunda** (6) — Bayern Munich (loan). Explosive young winger — raw pace and a direct threat off the right. Australia's most exciting prospect.
- **Tete Yengi** (5) — Ipswich Town. Physical striker who leads the line and offers an aerial focal point.

SET PIECES

PK: Ajdin Hrustic · **FK:** Ajdin Hrustic · **Corners:** Jackson Irvine / Ajdin Hrustic (delivery) / Harry Souttar (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Jackson Irvine** *Central CM* — St. Pauli. Box-to-box engine. Covers ground, set piece presence, organizes the press.
- **Nestory Irankunda** *Right wing* — Bayern loanee. Pace and directness off the right flank — Australia's spark in transition.
- **Ajdin Hrustic** *No. 10* — Verona. Technical playmaker. Set piece specialist. The creative link.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Tete Yengi** — Ipswich Town striker. Physical, wins headers. Primary aerial target in the box.
- **Harry Souttar** — Leicester CB. 6'6". Dominant aerial presence. Pushes up on all set pieces.

TACTICAL READ

Australia will fight for every point in Group D with USA, Paraguay, and Türkiye. The Socceroos reached the R16 in 2022 (lost to Argentina 2-1) and have genuine tournament know-how. Key limitation: squad depth and individual quality compared to top teams. Group D is the weakest in the tournament on paper — Australia could pull a result on a given day. Market edge: Australia to advance from group at long odds is a speculative value play. The group is soft enough for them to nick a result.

MARKET EDGES

LOW Australia to advance from Group D is a speculative value play. The group is soft — Paraguay and Türkiye are beatable. *Long odds speculative play. Australia beat Denmark at the 2022 WC. They're capable of surprises.*

MEDIUM Australia under 2.5 goals in matches vs. USA and Paraguay. They defend deep and counter. Popovic's system is built to frustrate. *Australia unders are historically reliable. They don't open up against quality opponents.*

Türkiye

Group D · Outright +8000 · Win Grp 17.7%

OVERVIEW

Türkiye qualified via UEFA Playoff C, beating Kosovo 1-0. Under coach Vincenzo Montella, they play an attacking 4-2-3-1 built around two exceptional playmakers: Arda Güler (Real Madrid) and Hakan Çalhanoglu (Inter). Kenan Yildiz (Juventus) is the goal threat — a 7.66 season rating and relentless work rate in the box. Türkiye's ceiling is an R16 or QF run. Their group draw — USA, Paraguay, Australia — is very winnable. Totals: OVER in attack-heavy matchups.

TOP SCORERS

- **Kenan Yildiz** (14) — Juventus. Main striker and goal threat. 7.66 season rating. Young, dynamic, and clinical in the box. Turkey's best finisher.
- **Hakan Çalhanoglu** (12) — Inter Milan. PK taker and midfield playmaker. World-class from dead balls. The engine of this squad.
- **Arda Güler** (9) — Real Madrid. Creative midfielder with elite technique. Chips in goals from distance and through balls.

SET PIECES

PK: Hakan Çalhanoglu · **FK:** Hakan Çalhanoglu / Arda Güler · **Corners:** Arda Güler (delivery) / Merih Demiral (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Hakan Çalhanoglu** *Central midfielder* — Inter Milan. The best player on this squad. Dictates tempo, takes penalties, and unlocks defenses with verticality. Turkey's most important player.
- **Kenan Yildiz** *Striker/Second forward* — Juventus. Mobile, two-footed, and goal-hungry. Turkey's primary finisher and the player who makes runs in behind.
- **Arda Güler** *Attacking midfielder* — Real Madrid. Vision, dribbling, and creativity. The player who makes magic happen in tight spaces.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Merih Demiral** — Central defender. Physical presence on both ends. Turkey's set piece aerial threat — scored the header against Austria at Euro 2024.
- **Kenan Yildiz** — Good in the air for his size. Creates chaos in box from corner delivery.

TACTICAL READ

Türkiye is the most dangerous of the six playoff qualifiers. Their group (USA, Paraguay, Australia) is beatable. If Güler and Çalhanoglu are both fit and in form, Turkey can advance. The R16 is their realistic ceiling — they'd face a second-place Group C finisher, likely a manageable draw. Arda Güler is the X-factor: when he plays freely and isn't double-marked, Turkey becomes a completely different team. Watch his early form in the group for R16 handicap bets.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Türkiye to advance from Group D. With USA, Paraguay, and Australia, this is one of the most open groups at the tournament. Turkey's playmakers give them real quality. Group advancement at any plus money is a value look. *63.9% simulated group advancement. The group draw is favorable.*

MEDIUM Hakan Çalhanoglu anytime scorer. He takes penalties and scores from range. Any match where Turkey is pressing and drawing fouls, he's dangerous. *PK taker advantage. Inter's set-piece stats back this up — Çalhanoglu scores 4+ PKs per season.*

LOW Kenan Yildiz first goal scorer at +350 or better in Turkey group games. He's the target man. Turkey are built to feed him. *Yildiz is the focal point of Turkish attacks but plays against quality defenders.*



Group E

Germany, Curaçao, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador

Germany

Group E · Outright +900 · Win Grp 35.5%

OVERVIEW

Euro 2024 hosts who reached the quarterfinals before falling to eventual champions Spain 2-1 in extra time. Julian Nagelsmann rebuilt this team around young talent — Wirtz and Musiala are generational. Germany 2026 is vertical, high-tempo, and physically relentless. This is not the disorganized 2022 Germany that went out in groups.

TOP SCORERS

- **Florian Wirtz** (18) — Liverpool (€150M, June 2025). Best young player in Europe. Had a slow settling-in period at Liverpool (4 goals, 3 assists in PL through March) but the ceiling is elite. Runs the Germany attack.
- **Kai Havertz** (20) — Arsenal. False-9 striker who drops deep and creates. Technical finisher.
- **Jamal Musiala** (15) — Bayern Munich. Box-of-tricks dribbler. Creates goals from nothing.

SET PIECES

PK: Kai Havertz · **FK:** Florian Wirtz · **Corners:** Florian Wirtz / Leon Goretzka

SHOT CREATORS

- **Florian Wirtz** *No. 10 / Left inside forward* — Liverpool. Dribbles at pace, finds pockets, shoots on sight. Slow Premier League start doesn't erase his Leverkusen peak — international football suits him.
- **Jamal Musiala** *Right wing / No. 10* — Interchangeable with Wirtz. The Wirtz-Musiala axis is the best creative pair in the draw.
- **Joshua Kimmich** *Defensive CM* — Bayern Munich. Covers ground, distributes, reads the game. Defensive anchor.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Antonio Rüdiger** — Real Madrid CB. Dangerous on set pieces. Headers both ways. Has 5 NT goals.
- **Jonathan Tah** — Bayer Leverkusen. Dominant in the air. Expected starter alongside Rüdiger.

TACTICAL READ

Germany are a genuine dark horse. The Euro 2024 run showed the new identity — they beat Denmark 2-0 in the R16 and played their best football in years before Spain edged them 2-1 AET in the QF. That loss doesn't diminish what Nagelsmann built. Wirtz and Musiala are the two most creative players in the draw not named Vinícius Jr. Group E opponents Curaçao, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ecuador are all manageable. Expect double-digit goal difference in the group stage. The real question is whether they can beat Spain, France, or Brazil in a knockout — the QF loss proved they can compete, just not beat them yet.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Germany group stage over 2.5 goals in all 3 matches is near-lock value. They scored 13 goals in 5 Euro 2024 group/R16 matches. Curaçao, Ecuador, Côte d'Ivoire are all vulnerable. *Adjust only for injury to Wirtz or Musiala — check lineups before betting.*

MEDIUM Germany outright at +900 is underpriced relative to squad quality. Only Brazil and Spain match their attack. Worth a piece on the futures board. *Buy here. Real value comes from in-tournament futures if they clear the QF alive.*

MEDIUM Florian Wirtz anytime scorer in group matches. He starts every game and shoots first-look. Any odds above +400 on anytime scorer is +EV. *Monitor his fitness through the club season — he's come off a heavy schedule.*

Curaçao

Group E · Outright +100000 · Win Grp 0.1%

OVERVIEW

Curaçao are the smallest nation at the 2026 World Cup (population ~150,000) and the unlikeliest qualifier in tournament history. Dick Advocaat — one of football's great elder statesmen — took over a side built on Dutch-Caribbean dual nationals and turned them from CONCACAF journeymen into World Cup qualifiers. Leandro Bacuna is the captain and most experienced player, a capable right back / midfielder. Jürgen Locadia (ex-Brighton, ex-PSV) leads the line, with Tahith Chong providing pace and dribbling in transition. Group E has Germany, Côte d'Ivoire, and Ecuador. Curaçao will not score many goals. Their entire strategy is defensive organization and finding a moment in the Germany game — the most-watched slot they will ever have. Totals: UNDER in every game.

TOP SCORERS

- **Leandro Bacuna** (7) — Cardiff City. The most capped Curaçao player. Versatile — plays right back, right wing, central midfield. Works hard, delivers set pieces, and occasionally scores from distance. Leadership rather than goal threat.
- **Jürgen Locadia** (10) — Experienced forward (ex-Brighton, PSV, Hoffenheim). Physical, direct target man. Effective in the air and dangerous from crosses — Curaçao's most accomplished striker.
- **Tahith Chong** (5) — Sheffield Wednesday (ex-Manchester United). Pacy winger who can take on defenders. The one player who can create from nothing in transition.

SET PIECES

PK: Leandro Bacuna · **FK:** Leandro Bacuna · **Corners:** Leandro Bacuna (delivery) / Jürgen Locadia, Armando Obispo (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Leandro Bacuna** *Right midfielder / Wing back* — Cardiff City. The most technically complete player in the squad. His experience in the Championship and Premier League (including Aston Villa, Rangers) gives Curaçao a European-standard player on the right side.
- **Jürgen Locadia** *Centre forward* — The focal point up front. Holds the ball up under pressure and brings wide players into attacks — Curaçao's most accomplished striker.
- **Riechedly Bazoer** *Defensive midfielder* — Ex-Ajax. Protects the defense and recycles possession. Without him Curaçao cannot keep shape against top sides.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Jürgen Locadia** — Physical forward and Curaçao's main aerial threat. Set pieces are their most realistic path to a goal at the World Cup.
- **Armando Obispo** — PSV centre back who attacks corners. Physical presence in the box at set pieces.

TACTICAL READ

Advocaat knows exactly what this team is. He will not pretend they can play through Germany or Ecuador — they cannot. The tactical plan is pure pragmatism: 5-4-1, low block, break on transitions, score from a set piece if the moment arrives. The Germany game is a showcase — a nation of 150,000 on the global stage. The real game is Curaçao vs Côte d'Ivoire — if they can steal a point there, it would be the greatest result in Caribbean football history. More likely: three losses, zero points, but competitive scorelines.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Curaçao to cover +3.5 goals vs Germany. Germany are favorites but typically win 2-0 or 3-0 in group stage, not 6-0. Curaçao low-block limits the damage. *Germany in WC group stages vs heavy underdogs: 2022 beat Costa Rica 4-2 only. 2018 drew with Mexico. They do not always demolish organized defenses.*

MEDIUM Under 2 goals in Curaçao vs Ecuador. Both teams trend conservative. Ecuador are an organized side and Curaçao will park the bus. This game finishes 1-0 or 0-1. *Ecuador qualifying: 6 of 14 CONMEBOL games had under 2 goals. Curaçao will not open up.*

LOW Leandro Bacuna anytime goal scorer at +500 or better. He scored 2 goals in qualifying. In the high-profile matches, he is the set piece taker and the player most likely to produce a moment. *Long shot but represents real value if Bacuna is priced over +600.*

Côte d'Ivoire

Group E · Outright +5000 · Win Grp 26.5%

OVERVIEW

Emerse Fae's Côte d'Ivoire play a physical 4-3-3 built on defensive solidity and transition speed. 2023 AFCON champions on home soil. Amad Diallo and Evann Guessand lead the attack. Franck Kessié and Ibrahim Sangaré provide midfield steel. Built to compete physically with anyone. Totals Bias: UNDER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Amad Diallo** (10) — Manchester United. Electric wide forward — dribbles, scores, and carries the attack. Côte d'Ivoire's most dangerous player.
- **Nicolas Pépé** (12) — Former Arsenal. Pace on the right wing. Experienced at the highest level.
- **Simon Adingra** (7) — Brighton. Young winger. Pacy, direct, improving. Breakout at AFCON 2023.

SET PIECES

PK: Franck Kessié · **FK:** Franck Kessié · **Corners:** Ibrahim Sangaré (delivery) / Ousmane Diomande, Evann Guessand (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Amad Diallo** *Right wing / Forward* — Manchester United. Direct and two-footed — dribbles, scores, and is the focal point of the attack.
- **Franck Kessié** *Central CM* — Barcelona. Box-to-box powerhouse. Drives forward, tackles, scores from range.
- **Simon Adingra** *Left wing* — Brighton. Speed and directness. The breakout star of AFCON 2023.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Evann Guessand** — Aston Villa striker. Physical and strong in the air. Primary set-piece target.
- **Ousmane Diomande** — Sporting CP centre back. Athletic and dominant aerial presence on set pieces.

TACTICAL READ

Côte d'Ivoire won AFCON 2023 on home soil and carry genuine confidence. The squad blends European experience (Kessié, Amad Diallo, Adingra at Brighton) with physical, AFCON-hardened players. Group E with Germany, Ecuador, and Curaçao is tough but 2nd place is achievable. They beat strong teams at AFCON from low-block defensive shapes. Key: getting the new-look front line of Amad Diallo, Guessand, and Wahi firing without a settled veteran No. 9. Market edge: Côte d'Ivoire to advance from Group E alongside Germany is a genuine value play at these prices.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Côte d'Ivoire to advance from Group E at long odds. They're better than their seeding suggests — AFCON 2023 champions with European club quality. *Shop outright to advance. Ecuador is their main rival for 2nd. Both are winnable.*

MEDIUM Côte d'Ivoire under 2.5 goals in matches. They play low-block and transition. Even in attack they rarely commit to open football. *AFCON 2023 run was full of tight, controlled performances. Expect the same formula at the WC.*

Ecuador

Group E · Outright +6000 · Win Grp 27.3%

OVERVIEW

Sebastián Beccacece's Ecuador play an intense pressing 4-3-3 anchored by Moisés Caicedo in midfield. Young, fast, and fearless. Caicedo at Chelsea is one of the best CDMs in the Premier League. The squad is packed with young talent playing in top European leagues. Totals Bias: NEUTRAL.

TOP SCORERS

- **Enner Valencia** (40) — Internacional. Ecuador's all-time top scorer. 36 years old — veteran presence. 3 goals at the 2022 WC.
- **Moisés Caicedo** (5) — Chelsea. CDM but scores from distance. The engine of the entire squad.
- **Kendry Páez** (4) — Chelsea (on loan). 18 years old. Future star. Raw technical talent with elite ceiling.

SET PIECES

PK: Enner Valencia · **FK:** Moisés Caicedo · **Corners:** Pervis Estupiñán (delivery) / Enner Valencia (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Moisés Caicedo** *CDM / Press trigger* — Chelsea. Covers ground, wins the ball, scores from range. The heartbeat of Ecuador's press.
- **Enner Valencia** *Striker* — Veteran target man. Holds up play, scores on crosses. Experience in big moments.
- **Gonzalo Plata** *Right wing* — Flamengo. Direct winger who delivers from wide and cuts inside. Ecuador's main creative width.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Enner Valencia** — Veteran aerial target. Scored 3 goals at the 2022 WC including headers.
- **Piero Hincapié** — Bayer Leverkusen CB. Physical, attacks set pieces aggressively.

TACTICAL READ

Ecuador are Group E's wild card alongside Côte d'Ivoire. Caicedo is the key — he controls the midfield and allows Ecuador to press high. The squad is young and European-based. They reached the 2022 group stage (including a 2-0 opening win vs Qatar) and have continued to develop. Germany will likely top Group E, but Ecuador and Côte d'Ivoire will battle for 2nd. Market edge: Ecuador to advance from Group E at long odds is a genuine value play if Caicedo is fit.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Ecuador to advance from Group E at +6000 outright is speculative value. They're genuinely competing with Côte d'Ivoire for 2nd. Caicedo makes them dangerous against anyone. *Best as a group advancement bet rather than outright. The draw is beatable.*

MEDIUM Ecuador overs in group matches. They press high and allow transitions. Young team that plays without fear. *Especially applicable in Ecuador vs. Côte d'Ivoire — two attack-minded teams with midfield engines.*



Group F

Netherlands, Japan, Tunisia, Sweden

Netherlands

Group F · Outright +1200 · Win Grp 33.3%

OVERVIEW

Ronald Koeman's Netherlands play a physical 4-3-3 that defends compactly and attacks with pace on the wings. Van Dijk organizes the backline. Gakpo and Reijnders provide creativity. This team lacks the flair of historic Dutch squads but compensates with organization and physicality.

TOP SCORERS

- **Cody Gakpo** (19) — Liverpool. Left wing. Technical, two-footed. Scored 3 goals at the 2022 WC.
- **Donyell Malen** (15) — Roma (on loan from Aston Villa). Pace merchant. Right wing. In strong form — braces vs. Cagliari and Napoli in Feb 2026.
- **Memphis Depay** (14) — Corinthians. Netherlands' all-time top scorer. Still the focal point in the final third — creates, finishes, and takes set pieces.

SET PIECES

PK: Cody Gakpo · **FK:** Memphis Depay · **Corners:** Memphis Depay / Cody Gakpo

SHOT CREATORS

- **Cody Gakpo** *Left wing* — Liverpool's left-sided threat. Strong, technical, finds the net in big moments.
- **Frenkie de Jong** *Central midfielder / Deep playmaker* — Barcelona. Dictates tempo from deep, press-resistant, and the metronome of the Dutch midfield.
- **Tijjani Reijnders** *Central CM* — AC Milan. Underrated. Makes runs into the box. Scores from distance.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Virgil van Dijk** — Liverpool captain. 6'4". Bombs forward on late corners. 12 NT goals from set pieces.
- **Micky van de Ven** — Tottenham CB. Quick and strong — attacks set pieces and is a real aerial threat in the box.

TACTICAL READ

Netherlands are the tournament's 'danger team' — not outright favorites but capable of beating anyone on a given day. They reached the 2022 QF and lost to Argentina on PKs in a classic. Van Dijk in the center of defense is world-class. The Gakpo-Depay combination is dangerous on any surface. Group F opponents Japan, Tunisia, and Sweden — Japan vs. Netherlands is the trap game. Japan beat Germany and Spain in 2022. Key risk: Frenkie de Jong's fitness. If he plays, the midfield gets a full upgrade.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Netherlands to top Group F is underpriced. Japan is dangerous but Netherlands have the better squad depth. Tunisia and Sweden are both manageable, though Sweden's attack is the real test. *Group winner markets often have better odds than 'to advance'. Shop both.*

MEDIUM Van Dijk anytime scorer from set pieces in group stage is recurring +EV. He scores from corners more than any other CB in world football. *Look for corner-kick prop markets if available on Kalshi or Polymarket.*

MEDIUM Netherlands vs. Japan is the trap game. Japan beat Germany and Spain in 2022. Netherlands under 2.5 in that match is worth a look — Japan will set up the blue block. *Monitor betting volume on Japan pre-match — sharp money tends to know early.*

Japan

Group F · Outright +3000 · Win Grp 22.7%

OVERVIEW

Hajime Moriyasu's Japan play an adventurous 3-4-2-1 that blitzed Germany and Spain in 2022. Wing-backs Junya Itō and Doan provide width and pace. Takefusa Kubo is the creative fulcrum. This is the best Japanese squad ever assembled — packed with European starters who attack with intent. Totals Bias: OVER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Takefusa Kubo** (8) — Real Sociedad. The creative heartbeat of the squad. Dribbles at defenders, creates and scores. PK taker.
- **Daizen Maeda** (9) — Celtic. Relentless pressing forward with real pace — direct, hard-running, and a constant transition threat.
- **Ritsu Doan** (9) — Freiburg. Right wing. High shot volume, presses, creates. Scored against Spain in 2022.
- **Ayase Ueda** (7) — Feyenoord. Clinical striker. Improving rapidly in Eredivisie.

SET PIECES

PK: Takefusa Kubo · **FK:** Takefusa Kubo · **Corners:** Ritsu Doan / Junya Itō (delivery) / Kō Itakura (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Takefusa Kubo** *No. 10 / Right attacking mid* — Real Sociedad. The most technically gifted player. Dribbles, creates, shoots from distance. Takes PKs and free kicks.
- **Daichi Kamada** *No. 10 / Central mid* — Crystal Palace. Press-resistant creator who arrives late in the box. Links midfield and attack.
- **Ritsu Doan** *Right wing-back* — Freiburg. High shot volume, works hard defensively, scored the famous free kick vs. Spain in 2022.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Kō Itakura** — Borussia Mönchengladbach centre back. Commands the box and attacks set pieces — Japan's primary aerial threat.
- **Ritsu Doan** — Stronger in the air than his frame suggests. Scored a header against Spain in 2022.

TACTICAL READ

Japan are the tournament's most exciting dark horse. They beat Germany and Spain in the 2022 group stage — this is no accident. The squad is littered with European starters. Moriyasu's 3-4-2-1 is attack-minded, technically excellent, and generates high-volume chances. This is a different Japan from 2022 — they will attack and outscore problems rather than purely defending. Group F with Netherlands, Tunisia, and Sweden is winnable — Japan can top this group. Key risk: the 3-back system has defensive fragility on transitions. But they outscore. Japan overs in every game.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Japan to top Group F is underpriced vs. Netherlands. Their 3-4-2-1 creates more chances than Netherlands in attack. The trap game narrative favors Japan. *Japan topped their group in 2022 (above Germany and Spain). This squad is better.*

HIGH Japan overs in every group match. Moriyasu's attack-minded 3-4-2-1 generates chances at both ends. Tunisia and Sweden will attack Japan too. *This is not the defensive 2022 Japan. They are built to score now.*

MEDIUM Takefusa Kubo anytime scorer props. He's the PK taker and free kick specialist. At Real Sociedad he's one of La Liga's best creators. *Any Kubo anytime scorer odds above +300 is +EV given his role as the team's creative engine.*

Tunisia

Group F · Outright +30000 · Win Grp 9.1%

OVERVIEW

Tunisia are AFCON regulars who arrive at the World Cup with a disciplined, compact 4-3-3 built on defensive organization and counter-attacking football. Ellyes Skhiri (Eintracht Frankfurt) is the quality anchor — technically the best Tunisian player in European football. Firas Chaouat is the focal point up front. Hannibal Mejbri provides energy and creativity in the middle. Tunisia's football philosophy is conservative: defend your structure, win second balls, and hit on the break. Group F draw is everything — one winnable game makes all the difference. Totals: UNDER — Tunisia are defensive-first in every game.

TOP SCORERS

- **Firas Chaouat** (9) — Zamalek. Physical, direct striker who leads the line — Tunisia's main goal threat at this level.
- **Ellyes Skhiri** (8) — Eintracht Frankfurt. The best Tunisian player in European football. Technical quality, goals from distance, and leadership in midfield.
- **Hannibal Mejbri** (6) — Burnley. Combative, technically gifted midfielder. Tunisia's creative spark and a threat from distance.
- **Sebastian Tounekti** (5) — Hammarby. Pacy, direct wide forward — Tunisia's emerging attacking talent.

SET PIECES

PK: Ali Abdi · **FK:** Ellyes Skhiri · **Corners:** Ellyes Skhiri / Ali Abdi (delivery) / Montassar Talbi, Dylan Bronn (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Ellyes Skhiri** *Central midfielder* — Frankfurt. By far Tunisia's best player. Physically elite and technically clean. When Skhiri is in form, Tunisia's midfield is competitive.
- **Firas Chaouat** *Centre forward* — The focal point. Work rate is excellent — Tunisia's game plan requires their striker to press and hold, and Chaouat does both.
- **Hannibal Mejbri** *No. 10 / Central mid* — Tunisia's most technical attacking player. Vision and press-resistance the others don't have.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Montassar Talbi** — Lorient CB. Tunisia's best aerial defender. Pushes forward at corners. Physical and disciplined.
- **Dylan Bronn** — Salernitana/elsewhere. Physical CB. Tunisia's second aerial weapon at set pieces.

TACTICAL READ

Tunisia's World Cup ceiling is a group-stage exit with some respectability. That's the honest assessment. Skhiri is the only player who could realistically play for a top-20 European nation. The rest of the squad is built for AFCON-level football. Their compact 4-3-3 can frustrate better teams for 60 minutes — they held France to 1-0 in 2022 — but sustaining that for a full group stage is very difficult. The market edge: Tunisia group game unders are a consistent bet. They will defend and counter. Back Tunisia to keep it close against their weakest group opponent. Against a top team, back under 3.5 goals.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Tunisia group games unders. Their defensive 4-3-3 produces sub-2.5 goal games consistently. Even vs strong opponents, Tunisia make it hard. Back unders in every Tunisia group game. *Tunisia conceded 14 goals in 14 qualifiers. That's a 1.0 goals against average — genuinely solid.*

LOW Tunisia to score vs their weakest group game opponent. Even the most defensive team scores sometimes. At +150 for Tunisia to score in a game, that's worth a small unit against a weak side. *Tunisia score in bunches vs weaker AFCON opposition. Against a 30+ ranked World Cup team, they're competitive.*

LOW Ellyes Skhiri to be Tunisia's best performer — not a betting market, but a note. If you're in a tournament where you draft player of the tournament nominees, Skhiri is your Tunisian pick. *Skhiri is Bundesliga quality. He'll be the standout player for Tunisia and likely gets noticed by bigger clubs.*

Sweden

Group F · Outright +12000 · Win Grp 8.8%

OVERVIEW

Sweden qualified via UEFA Playoff B on Viktor Gyökeres' 88th-minute winner against Poland (3-2). This is a team built entirely around one player. Gyökeres (Arsenal) was the Premier League's most prolific striker before his Arsenal move — his physical presence, hold-up play, and ruthlessness in the box are elite. Alexander Isak (Newcastle) provides a second world-class striker option. Group F draw — Netherlands, Japan, Tunisia — is tough. Sweden need to beat Tunisia and steal a point from Japan to have any chance. Totals: OVER in any game where Sweden attack in open space.

TOP SCORERS

- **Viktor Gyökeres** (29) — Arsenal. PK taker. Premier League top scorer. The most prolific striker in European football this season. Hat-trick in qualifying vs Ukraine. Physical, relentless, deadly.
- **Alexander Isak** (18) — Newcastle. World-class second striker. Pace, technical skill, and a nose for goal. Newcastle's best player. Can play wide or central.
- **Anthony Elanga** (7) — Newcastle. Pacy, direct wide forward who links midfield and attack with late runs into the box.

SET PIECES

PK: Viktor Gyökeres · **FK:** Yasin Ayari / Alexander Isak · **Corners:** Benjamin Nygren (delivery) / Viktor Gyökeres, Isak Hien (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Viktor Gyökeres** *Striker* — Arsenal. The entire offense. Gyökeres leads the PL in goals and xG. Sweden are not a coherent team — they're a delivery system for Viktor Gyökeres. Back him in every goal scorer market.
- **Alexander Isak** *Second striker / wide* — Newcastle. Elite talent. Can drift wide and come in late. Creates his own shots — doesn't need service the way Gyökeres does.
- **Yasin Ayari** *Central / Attacking midfielder* — Brighton. Sweden's creative hub in this squad. Links the lines, drives forward, and unlocks defenses in tight spaces.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Viktor Gyökeres** — Powerful in the air. Scores on crosses and corners. A real aerial threat for a modern striker.
- **Isak Hien** — Atalanta CB. Tall, aggressive, and dominant at set pieces. Sweden's defensive anchor and corner-kick threat.

TACTICAL READ

Sweden without Gyökeres is a mid-level European side. Sweden with Gyökeres is a team capable of beating anyone on a given day. His partnership with Isak is the most talented front line Sweden has ever had. The question is Group F: Netherlands and Japan are both legitimate threats. Tunisia is the must-win. If Sweden beat Tunisia and draw Japan, they're in. A win over Japan probably secures advancement. Gyökeres scorer props are the primary betting angle on this squad.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Viktor Gyökeres to score in every Sweden group game. He's the PK taker, the main striker, and statistically the hottest scorer in Europe. Sweden's group is hard — Netherlands are favorites — but Gyökeres will get chances. *Gyökeres has scored in 8 of his last 10 club and international matches. At Arsenal, he's converted goals at an extraordinary rate.*

MEDIUM Sweden vs Tunisia — Swedish team total over 1.5 goals. Sweden have world-class attack vs a beatable Tunisian defense. Gyökeres and Isak should create enough to cover. *Tunisia conceded in their last 6 competitive matches.*

LOW Sweden to advance from Group F. Tough group but not impossible. 58.9% sim probability. Netherlands are the group favorites but Sweden have quality. *Depends heavily on Sweden's defensive performance. They conceded 16 in 14 qualifying games — vulnerable at the back.*



Group G

Belgium, Iran, Egypt, New Zealand

Belgium

Group G · Outright +2000 · Win Grp 33.5%

OVERVIEW

Belgium's golden generation takes its final bow. Kevin De Bruyne (35) may be past peak Man City form but remains the most technically gifted midfielder in the draw. Romelu Lukaku (33) is still a penalty box menace if fit. Thibaut Courtois in goal is world-class and the difference in tight games. Jeremy Doku provides genuine electric pace on the right wing. Leandro Trossard contributes everywhere. The problem: this squad's ceiling has been declining since 2018 — they've never won a major tournament. Group G with Egypt, Iran, and Scotland is very winnable. Totals: NEUTRAL — Belgium grind wins but don't produce fireworks.

TOP SCORERS

- **Romelu Lukaku** (84) — Roma. Belgium's all-time leading scorer. Still a penalty box predator at 33. Injury concerns are the variable.
- **Kevin De Bruyne** (28) — Man City. Still the best passer in the tournament at 35. Drops deeper now but the vision is unmatched.
- **Jeremy Doku** (12) — Man City. Explosive pace and directness on the right. Belgium's most dangerous player going forward in 2026.
- **Leandro Trossard** (18) — Arsenal. Dynamic, two-footed, works hard both ways. Creates and scores in a free role.

SET PIECES

PK: Romelu Lukaku · **FK:** Kevin De Bruyne · **Corners:** Kevin De Bruyne (delivery) / Romelu Lukaku, Arthur Theate (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Kevin De Bruyne** *Central midfielder* — The brains. Even at 35, De Bruyne's passing range and creativity are elite. Sets the tempo for everything Belgium do.
- **Jeremy Doku** *Right wing* — Man City. The fastest Belgian. Takes on defenders, wins fouls, creates and scores. Belgium's most direct threat.
- **Leandro Trossard** *Left wing / AM* — Arsenal. Intelligent movement, technical quality, press resistance. Belgium's most complete attacker in 2026.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Romelu Lukaku** — 6'3". Belgium's primary aerial target. Scores headers regularly at club and international level.
- **Koni De Winter** — Juventus CB. Physical presence who pushes forward at corners. One of Belgium's better aerial threats in the squad.

TACTICAL READ

Belgium set up in a 4-3-3 under Rudi Garcia with De Bruyne operating as the deep-lying creator. The system is built to protect aging legs while maximizing Doku and Trossard's pace in transition. Courtois is the wildcard — if he's between the sticks at 100%, Belgium can keep clean sheets against anyone. The golden generation's failure to win anything haunts them. This is realistically their last shot. Group G is favorable — Egypt have Salah but a weaker supporting cast. Belgium win the group. The ceiling is QF.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Belgium to win Group G. Egypt have Salah/Marmoush but Belgium's squad depth is superior. Scotland and Iran are both beatable. Belgium should advance with room to spare. *Belgium's biggest group game threat is Egypt. Both games vs Scotland/Iran are W-probability >70%.*

MEDIUM Jeremy Doku to score in the tournament at +150 or better. He plays for Man City and has proven international form. As Belgium's most direct attacker, he'll get chances. *Doku is Belgium's biggest direct threat and gets into dangerous positions constantly.*

MEDIUM De Bruyne assists props. Even at 35, he's the primary creator. If Belgium go deep, he leads the tournament in chances created. *De Bruyne has always elevated in major tournaments. Assists market is where his value lives.*

Iran

Group G · Outright +20000 · Win Grp 21.4%

OVERVIEW

Team Melli under Amir Ghalenoei are organized, physical, and genuinely dangerous — especially at set pieces and on transitions. Mehdi Taremi (Inter Milan) is the best player in Iranian football history: intelligent movement, two-footed finishing, Champions League-caliber. Ali Alipour provides the second-striker depth behind Taremi. Iranian football has become tactically sophisticated — they press in waves and are surprisingly difficult to break down. Group G with Belgium, Egypt, and New Zealand: Iran can finish second. They beat Wales and drew with England at WC 2022. The pedigree is real. Totals: UNDER — Ghalenoei's system squeezes the life out of games.

TOP SCORERS

- **Mehdi Taremi** (48) — Inter Milan. Champions League hat-trick against Porto. Clinical finisher, exceptional movement off the ball, dangerous in the air and on the ground. The only player at this World Cup who can carry a team of this quality to a quarterfinal if the draw breaks right.
- **Ali Alipour** (12) — Persepolis. The second striker behind Taremi. Sharp movement in the box and a reliable finisher at domestic and continental level.
- **Mohammad Mohebi** (8) — Rostov. Pacy winger who provides the width. His directness and pace is Iran's most consistent wide threat in qualifying.

SET PIECES

PK: Mehdi Taremi · **FK:** Alireza Jahanbakhsh / Saman Ghoddos · **Corners:** Alireza Jahanbakhsh (delivery) / Mehdi Taremi, Hossein Kanaanizadegan (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Mehdi Taremi** *Centre forward* — Inter Milan. The most technically complete striker at this World Cup outside the top 8 nations. His off-ball movement creates space for everyone around him. Every goal Iran score runs through him or comes from his movement dragging defenders out of position.
- **Saman Ghoddos** *Attacking midfielder* — The creative outlet who drops between the lines to combine with Taremi. Adds guile and shooting from the edge of the box.
- **Alireza Jahanbakhsh** *Right midfielder* — Feyenoord veteran. His work rate, delivery, and experience on the right side gives Iran structure. One of the most important non-headline players in this team.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Mehdi Taremi** — 6'1". Elite in the air — his Champions League headed goals for Porto showed exactly this. The biggest danger at every corner.
- **Hossein Kanaanzadegan** — Centre back, 6'3". Physical and dominant. Iran score a disproportionate number of set piece goals — Kanaanzadegan is the weapon at the back post.

TACTICAL READ

Iran are seriously dangerous at this price. Ghalenoei has constructed a 4-3-3 that morphs into a 4-5-1 out of possession — disciplined, physical, and hard to break down. Taremi and Ghoddos are both capable of hurting defenses at World Cup level. Group G: Belgium have De Bruyne/Lukaku but are an aging side — Iran beat Morocco (a better team) at WC 2022. Egypt are the comparable opponent they should beat. New Zealand are the gimme. The path to the Round of 16 is real.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Iran to advance from Group G at +250 or better. Belgium are aging. Egypt are peers. New Zealand are beatable. Taremi alone is worth two wins in Group G. *Iran at WC 2022: beat Wales 2-0, drew USA 1-1, lost England 4-2. They compete and win games. Belgium are not England.*

HIGH Mehdi Taremi to score in the group stage at any price under -120. He scores at World Cup level — Champions League-quality striker in a group with beatable defenses. *Taremi at WC 2022: 2 goals in 3 games including a bicycle kick vs England. He performs on the biggest stage.*

MEDIUM Iran vs New Zealand Under 1.5 goals. Iran win 1-0 and kill the game. Ghalenoei teams manage leads carefully. New Zealand have limited attacking output. *Iran kept clean sheets vs the USA and Senegal in friendlies. They manage games at 1-0.*

Egypt

Group G · Outright +35000 · Win Grp 19.2%

OVERVIEW

Egypt's entire World Cup runs through Mohamed Salah. The Liverpool legend will be 34 in June 2026 — one final chance at the tournament that has eluded him. Omar Marmoush (Man City, 26) is the breakout star who changes everything: his 24-goal Bundesliga season with Frankfurt in 2024/25 forced Europe to pay attention, and Man City paid over £60m. Salah + Marmoush is legitimately one of the most dangerous attacking duos in the draw. Hossam Hassan's 4-2-3-1 puts Salah at the left wing with Marmoush central. Group G with Belgium, Iran, and Scotland — Egypt can advance. Totals: OVER — Salah and Marmoush generate volume. Egypt concede on the counter.

TOP SCORERS

- **Mohamed Salah** (60) — Liverpool. 34 years old and still one of the best players in the world. Salah in a World Cup is the biggest free-agent bet in football — he's been devastating for Liverpool for 8 years.
- **Omar Marmoush** (18) — Manchester City. 24 Bundesliga goals in 2024/25. Egypt's breakout star. Playing for Man City in 2026 after his Frankfurt transfer. Clinical and dangerous.
- **Zizo** (13) — Al Ahly. Versatile winger and attacking midfielder. Creates and scores — Egypt's most dangerous attacking option behind Salah and Marmoush.
- **Trézéguet** (10) — Trabzonspor / elsewhere. Technical right winger. Scores important goals for Egypt. Experience at the highest level.

SET PIECES

PK: Mohamed Salah · **FK:** Mohamed Salah · **Corners:** Mohamed Salah (delivery) / Mohamed Abdelmonem, Yasser Ibrahim (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Mohamed Salah** *Left wing / second striker* — The king. At 34, Salah's movement and finishing are still elite. He'll arrive motivated for his last major tournament. Egypt's entire game plan is: find Salah.
- **Omar Marmoush** *Centre forward / right wing* — Man City. The new face of Egyptian football. His Bundesliga season was genuinely spectacular. A midfielder/forward hybrid who presses, creates and scores.
- **Trézéguet** *Right wing* — Experience and technical quality. Creates and scores from the right. Marmoush's introduction has pushed him to a wider role but he contributes.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Mohamed Abdelmonem** — Al Ahly CB. Egypt's main aerial weapon at set pieces. Pushes forward on corners.
- **Yasser Ibrahim** — Al Ahly CB. Physical and strong in the air — a set-piece threat in the box.

TACTICAL READ

Egypt are criminally underrated at +35000 in Group G. Salah is one of the best players in the world. Marmoush had a better goal-scoring season than almost every striker at this tournament. Group G has Belgium (golden generation, declining), Iran (solid but limited), and Scotland (hard to beat but lacking quality). Egypt can legitimately win this group on their day. The market is pricing Egypt based on AFCON-level performance, not on Salah+Marmoush. Back Egypt to advance from Group G. At +35000 outright, there's genuine dark horse value if they hit form.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Egypt to advance from Group G. Salah and Marmoush are two of the most dangerous attacking players in the tournament. Belgium are declining. Scotland are limited. Back Egypt to advance — this is significant +EV. *Egypt's attacking firepower vs Group G opposition is heavily underpriced by oddsmakers still anchored to AFCON perceptions.*

HIGH Omar Marmoush to score in the tournament at +120 or better. He just scored 24 Bundesliga goals. He's playing for Man City. He will get chances and he will score. *Marmoush is arguably the tournament's most underrated player. Back him early before the price drops.*

MEDIUM Mohamed Salah anytime scorer in each Egypt group game. Even at 34, he converts from penalty areas. Don't overthink this. Salah scores for Egypt. *Salah has 60 international goals in 97 caps. That's 0.62 goals per game — elite conversion.*

New Zealand

Group G · Outright +80000 · Win Grp 3.1%

OVERVIEW

The All Whites under Darren Bazeley are the OFC's representatives at a World Cup for the third time. The entire New Zealand game plan is simple and direct: win the ball, get it to Chris Wood, defend your box. Wood (Nottingham Forest) is a Premier League-caliber target striker who scores above his billing — 12+ goals per season in the top flight. Beyond Wood, the quality drops sharply. Marko Stamenić and Joe Bell provide the midfield engine. Group G with Belgium, Iran, and Egypt is one of the toughest possible draws. New Zealand will not advance but they will make games difficult. Totals: UNDER — Bazeley teams sit deep and play direct.

TOP SCORERS

- **Chris Wood** (34) — Nottingham Forest. The only Premier League-class player in New Zealand. Physical, aerial, intelligent — he will score at least one World Cup goal if New Zealand get their shape right. All of their attacking intent flows through him.
- **Liberato Cacace** (7) — Empoli (Serie A). Left back / left midfielder who provides the only real attacking width. Surprisingly effective going forward. Creates the crosses Wood attacks.
- **Marko Stamenić** (5) — Olympiacos. The engine room. Press-resistant for this level, breaks up attacks, and finds passes forward that release Wood.

SET PIECES

PK: Chris Wood · **FK:** Liberato Cacace / Joe Bell · **Corners:** Liberato Cacace (delivery) / Chris Wood, Tyler Bindon (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Chris Wood** *Centre forward* — Nottingham Forest. The singular tactical asset of this team. Corners, free kicks, long balls, second balls — Wood attacks all of them. He is the most important player in New Zealand football history for this moment.
- **Liberato Cacace** *Left wing back* — Empoli. The only player outside Wood who can cause a professional-level problem for opponents. His run down the left and delivery into the box is the template for how New Zealand try to score.
- **Joe Bell** *Central midfielder* — Wolfsburg (Germany). Playing in the Bundesliga 2 gives Bell the highest-level regular experience in this squad outside Wood. Defensive in nature but distributes well.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Chris Wood** — 6'3". The best aerial striker in this group outside a fully switched-on Romelu Lukaku. Every corner is delivered to Wood. This is their best scoring opportunity.
- **Michael Boxall** — Minnesota United CB. Physical, attacks corners. New Zealand historically score set piece goals at World Cups.

TACTICAL READ

New Zealand's realistic World Cup strategy: not concede five in any game, score one goal (probably Chris Wood from a set piece), and go home with dignity. That is not pessimism — it is the reality of OFC football. The All Whites are organized and disciplined and they will not be humiliated. But Belgium, Iran, and Egypt are all significantly better in technical quality. The best prop on New Zealand is Wood to score (anytime) at +300 or better in the group stage.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Chris Wood anytime goal scorer at +280 or better vs Iran or vs Egypt. Wood scores in big games. He always does. *Wood: 12 Premier League goals in 2024/25. He scores 30%+ of games he starts. Even at WC level his aerial quality creates opportunities.*

MEDIUM New Zealand to cover +2.5 handicap vs Belgium. Belgium are aging — De Bruyne at 35, Lukaku at 33. They will not run up scores in a Group G opener. NZ sits deep and limits damage. *Belgium at recent major tournaments: beat Panama 3-0 at WC 2018, beat Canada 1-0 at WC 2022. They do not demolish organized defenses easily anymore.*

MEDIUM New Zealand vs Iran Under 2 goals total. Iran wins 1-0. Ghalenoei kills the game after scoring. New Zealand do not have the quality to break Iran's defensive shape. *Iran are the defensive expert in Group G. They manage 1-0 wins without conceding many chances.*



Group H

Spain, Uruguay, Saudi Arabia, Cape Verde

Spain

Group H · Outright +400 · Win Grp 40.6%

OVERVIEW

Luis de la Fuente's Spain play a possession-based 4-3-3 that suffocates opponents. Euro 2024 champions with the youngest squad in the draw. Yamal and Williams provide electric width. Rodri anchors midfield. The most complete team in the tournament — depth at every position, tactical flexibility, and a manager who trusts youth. Totals Bias: OVER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Mikel Oyarzabal** (14) — Real Sociedad. Spain's penalty taker and a clutch finisher — scored the Euro 2024 final winner. The experienced focal point up front.
- **Dani Olmo** (14) — Barcelona. Euro 2024 joint Golden Boot. Creates and scores from the No. 10 role. Technical elite.
- **Lamine Yamal** (12) — Barcelona. 18 years old. Euro 2024 breakout star. Youngest ever WC player for Spain. Generational talent.
- **Nico Williams** (8) — Athletic Bilbao. Explosive left wing. Pace and directness to burn. Euro 2024 winner.

SET PIECES

PK: Mikel Oyarzabal · **FK:** Dani Olmo · **Corners:** Dani Olmo / Lamine Yamal (delivery) / Mikel Oyarzabal (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Lamine Yamal** *Right wing* — The breakout star of Euro 2024. Dribbles at full backs, creates, scores impossible goals. 18 years old.
- **Nico Williams** *Left wing* — Athletic Bilbao. Explosive pace and directness. The Yamal-Williams combo is the most terrifying in the draw.
- **Rodri** *Defensive CM* — Man City. Reigning Ballon d'Or winner. The best defensive midfielder in the world. Controls the tempo.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Mikel Oyarzabal** — Real Sociedad. Scores headers at international level and arrives in the box on set pieces. A primary target.
- **Aymeric Laporte** — Al Nassr CB (formerly Man City). Pushes forward on corners. Physical presence in both boxes.

TACTICAL READ

Spain are the clear tournament favorites for a reason. Euro 2024 showed this team can dominate possession AND counter-attack at pace. The Yamal-Williams wing combination is the most terrifying in the draw. Rodri (reigning Ballon d'Or winner) is the best defensive midfielder in the world. Group H with Uruguay, Saudi Arabia, and Cape Verde is manageable — expect Spain to cruise through. The real question is whether any team can match their midfield control in a 90-minute knockout game. The value is NOT in outright winner (too short at +400) — it's in Spain to reach the final or Spain group stage overs.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Spain group stage overs. Their 4-3-3 generates the most chances of any team in the draw. Yamal and Williams force opponents to attack, creating open games. *Spain averaged 3.1 goals per game at Euro 2024 in the group stage. The draw is favorable.*

HIGH Spain to reach the final is the market edge at plus-money (-150 range). At +400 outright it's too short, but reaching the final is underpriced given the squad depth. *If Spain clears the QF, they're the -150 favorite to win it. The value is in pre-tournament to final.*

MEDIUM Lamine Yamal Golden Boot props. He's +1800 and plays every minute for Spain. At 18 with this system around him, he's a legitimate +EV at that price. *Spain plays the most games if they go deep. Yamal's shot volume makes him dangerous for Golden Boot.*

Uruguay

Group H · Outright +5000 · Win Grp 36.5%

OVERVIEW

Marcelo Bielsa's Uruguay represent the most exciting rebuild in CONMEBOL. The post-Suárez and Cavani generation has fully arrived. Federico Valverde (Real Madrid, 27) is one of the three best midfielders in the world — box-to-box, goals, assists, and relentless. Darwin Núñez (Liverpool, 26) is explosive and powerful when confident. Ronald Araújo (Barcelona) and José María Giménez are a world-class defensive pair — when both are fit. Bielsa demands complete pressing commitment and creates organized chaos. Group H with Spain, Saudi Arabia, and Cape Verde — Uruguay finishes second and hits the knockouts. Totals: NEUTRAL — Bielsa's sides are intense but defensive quality keeps scores tight.

TOP SCORERS

- **Darwin Núñez** (19) — Liverpool. Explosive, powerful, and unpredictable. When confident, he's one of the most dangerous strikers in the world. 26 years old.
- **Federico Valverde** (14) — Real Madrid. Goals from midfield, long-range shots, set pieces. One of the best in the world at his position.
- **Facundo Pellistri** (8) — Panathinaikos. Pacy, direct winger who provides width and end product. Uruguay's creative option from the flank.
- **Giorgian De Arrascaeta** (14) — Flamengo. The most technical player in the squad. Creates from the No. 10 position. The link between midfield and Darwin.

SET PIECES

PK: Darwin Núñez · **FK:** Federico Valverde · **Corners:** Federico Valverde / De Arrascaeta (delivery) / Ronald Araújo, José María Giménez (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Federico Valverde** *Central midfielder* — Real Madrid. Best player on the team. Drives with the ball, scores from range, and presses relentlessly. The engine of Bielsa's system.
- **Darwin Núñez** *Centre forward* — Liverpool. Physical and direct. Bielsa uses him as the high press reference point. When sharp in front of goal, he wins games alone.
- **Giorgian De Arrascaeta** *Attacking midfielder* — Flamengo. The creative brain. Intelligent movement and technical quality in tight spaces. Connects Valverde to Darwin.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Ronald Araújo** — Barcelona. World-class CB who is elite in the air at both ends. A genuine set piece threat from the back.
- **Darwin Núñez** — Liverpool. Strong in the air for a striker. 6'1" and physical. Scores headers.

TACTICAL READ

Bielsa's Uruguay is one of the most fascinating bets in the draw. His pressing system is the most demanding in football — players run 13+ km per game. This team will leave everything on the pitch. The question is whether Darwin Núñez reaches his ceiling: when he's confident, Uruguay are a genuine QF/SF team. When he's missing easy chances, they're not. Group H is about securing second place — Spain win the group. Against Saudi Arabia and Cape Verde, Uruguay have too much quality. The market prices them at +5000, which is fair value. The edge is: Uruguay to reach the QF (+EV if Darwin is in form by the time they get there).

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Uruguay to advance from Group H. Second place behind Spain is their floor. Saudi Arabia and Cape Verde are both beatable. Bielsa will have them organized. *Uruguay have missed the knockouts only once since 2002. With Valverde and Araújo, this is a proper team.*

MEDIUM Federico Valverde to score in the tournament at +120 or better. He scored in the 2022 WC and regularly finds the net for Real Madrid. As set piece taker and box-to-box midfielder, he gets into scoring positions constantly. *Valverde scored vs Ghana at 2022 WC. Real Madrid's workload use means he arrives fresh.*

MEDIUM Darwin Núñez first scorer in a group game at +350 range. Bielsa will get him motivated. One game where everything clicks, he wins it alone. *Núñez scored 18 goals for Liverpool in 2023/24. He has the quality — it's confidence and application.*

Saudi Arabia

Group H · Outright +40000 · Win Grp 5%

OVERVIEW

Saudi Arabia arrive at the 2026 World Cup still living off the greatest group-stage upset in history — beating Lionel Messi's Argentina 2-1 in Qatar 2022. Georgios Donis has since built a more organized tactical unit. Salem Al-Dawsari remains the attacking threat — direct, fast, and capable of a world-class moment. Saud Abdulhamid (Roma) is the best Saudi player in European football. The squad is heavily influenced by Saudi Pro League investment — quality has improved but the gap to the world's best remains large. Group H with Spain and Uruguay — Saudi Arabia realistically fights Cape Verde for third or fourth. Totals: UNDER — Mancini defends deep and counter-attacks.

TOP SCORERS

- **Salem Al-Dawsari** (23) — Al Hilal. Saudi Arabia's all-time top scorer. The hero of the Argentina win. Fast, direct, and capable of goals that defy expectation.
- **Saleh Al-Shehri** (15) — Al Hilal. The striker who scored vs Argentina in 2022. Physical and hardworking. Saudi Arabia's primary forward.
- **Saud Abdulhamid** (8) — Roma. Saudi Arabia's best player in European football. Right back by trade but contributes going forward.
- **Firas Al-Buraikan** (12) — Al-Ahli. Saudi Arabia's modern centre-forward — mobile and hard-working, the main striker alongside Al-Shehri.

SET PIECES

PK: Saleh Al-Shehri · **FK:** Salem Al-Dawsari · **Corners:** Salem Al-Dawsari (delivery) / Hassan Al-Tambakti, Abdulelah Al-Amri (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Salem Al-Dawsari** *Left wing / second striker* — Al Hilal. The danger man. Quick, direct, and has a left foot capable of world-class moments. Saudi Arabia's only genuine individual talent.
- **Saud Abdulhamid** *Right back* — Roma. Technical quality and drive from the right back position. By far Saudi Arabia's most experienced European player.
- **Saleh Al-Shehri** *Centre forward* — Al Hilal. The focal point of Saudi Arabia's attack. Works hard, presses, and scores when it matters.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Hassan Al-Tambakti** — Al-Hilal. Saudi Arabia's physical CB. Pushes forward at set pieces — the most dominant aerial presence in the squad.
- **Saleh Al-Shehri** — Physical forward. Strong in the box. Saudi Arabia's best aerial option up front at set pieces.

TACTICAL READ

Saudi Arabia under Georgios Donis play a 4-5-1 defensive block that absorbs pressure and lives for Al-Dawsari moments on the counter. The Argentina win proved this system can execute to perfection on the right day. In Group H, they face Spain (the tournament favorite) and Uruguay (Bielsa's elite pressing side). The realistic ceiling is a point from Cape Verde and a competitive showing vs Spain or Uruguay. Any point from Spain or Uruguay would be a significant achievement. The market prices them correctly — there's no value in Saudi Arabia to advance. The value: Saudi Arabia to score in each game at +120 or better.

MARKET EDGES

LOW Saudi Arabia to score vs Cape Verde at -130. They'll have territorial advantage vs the smallest qualifier. Al-Dawsari will create something. Take the money-line or the 'Saudi Arabia to score' market. *Saudi Arabia scored in 8 of their last 10 competitive games including qualifiers.*

LOW Saudi Arabia total goals under 1.5 in the Spain game. Donis will set up to absorb and counter. Spain are +400 tournament favorites. This game finishes 2-0 or 3-0 to Spain with KSA barely threatening. *Donis's 4-5-1 is built for exactly this game — absorb, survive, hope for a counter goal.*

LOW There is genuine no-value at +40000 outright. The group doesn't allow it. Bet against Saudi Arabia in the Spain and Uruguay games without hesitation. *They are the group's weakest team. Spain and Uruguay both have world-class squads that are 2-3 levels above Saudi Arabia's.*

Cape Verde

Group H · Outright +60000 · Win Grp 1.1%

OVERVIEW

Cape Verde are the African story of this World Cup — an island nation of 600,000 that punches consistently above its weight. Coach Bubista (Pedro Brito) has turned Cape Verde into a legitimate tactical unit: organized 4-4-2 that transitions quickly and exploits set pieces with physical players. Ryan Mendes (Sporting CP) is the technical leader — a fast, direct winger who plays regularly in the Primeira Liga. Roberto Lopes and Stopira provide the structural platform. Group H with Spain, Uruguay, and Saudi Arabia is a death draw. Cape Verde's target is beating or drawing Saudi Arabia and keeping Spain and Uruguay to respectable scorelines. Totals: UNDER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Ryan Mendes** (18) — Sporting CP. The best player in Cape Verde's history. Plays regularly in a Liga title-winning club squad. Left-footed, pacy, technically gifted — he does not look out of place in any company. Sets up as many goals as he scores.
- **Garry Rodrigues** (12) — Turkish Super Lig. Winger with pace and an European career. Aggressive, direct, and capable of moments of quality against organized defenses. Champions League experience from Galatasaray.
- **Nuno da Costa** (7) — Experienced forward (ex-Nottingham Forest, Caen). Physical striker who holds the ball up and provides the target for Mendes and Rodrigues to combine around.

SET PIECES

PK: Ryan Mendes · **FK:** Ryan Mendes · **Corners:** Ryan Mendes (delivery) / Logan Costa, Stopira (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Ryan Mendes** *Left winger / Attacking midfielder* — Sporting CP. The most dangerous player Cape Verde have. Regular in Liga Portugal football — his technical level is genuinely elite for a 600,000-person nation. Plays with width and directness. Set piece delivery is one of the best in this group.
- **Garry Rodrigues** *Right winger* — Explosive right-side attacker who pushes the defensive line back. Combined with Mendes on the left, Cape Verde have two wide threats more dangerous than their ranking suggests.
- **Stopira** *Centre back / Captain* — Veteran defender who has played in Spain and Portugal. Leadership and organization at the back. Cape Verde's defensive identity starts with Stopira's reading of the game.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Logan Costa** — Toulouse CB, 6'2". A focal aerial target on attacking set pieces — Cape Verde load the box, with Logan Costa attacking the near post while Stopira attacks the back post.
- **Stopira** — Captain and veteran centre back who attacks late at corners. Physical and intelligent in the air.

TACTICAL READ

Bubista has Cape Verde playing their best football ever. AFCON 2023 quarterfinal, consistent qualifications — this is not a fluke nation. In Group H: Spain win the group, Uruguay should too, but Cape Verde vs Saudi Arabia is a real game. Saudi Arabia have better resources but Cape Verde have better tactical cohesion. Ryan Mendes is a Sporting CP player — he is better than anything Saudi Arabia's domestic league produces. The market has this as a formality for Saudi. It is not.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Cape Verde to beat or draw Saudi Arabia in Group H. Cape Verde are more organized and technically superior to Saudi Arabia's domestic players. Ryan Mendes at Sporting CP is simply better. *Saudi Arabia qualified on the back of domestic league players outside a few Europe-based stars. Cape Verde are tactically superior.*

HIGH Cape Verde Under 2 total goals vs Spain. Spain will not run up the score against organized opposition. Cape Verde sits deep against elite teams. This game finishes 1-0 or 2-0. *Spain typically score 1-2 goals vs organized defenses. Under 2.5 in Spain vs African nations is a consistent pattern at major tournaments.*

MEDIUM Ryan Mendes anytime goal scorer at +350 or better vs Saudi Arabia. He plays in Liga Portugal for Sporting — Saudi defenders are not at that level. Back him to convert. *Mendes averages a goal or assist every 1.8 games for Cape Verde. Against Saudi Arabia's level, he will have opportunities.*



Group I

France, Senegal, Norway, Iraq

France

Group I · Outright +700 · Win Grp 37.8%

OVERVIEW

Didier Deschamps' final tournament as France manager. 4-2-3-1 with Mbappé as the central striker or left-sided forward. France have the most individually talented squad in the tournament. Tchouaméni-Koné double pivot. Saliba-Upamécano CB pairing. This team can win ugly or beautiful. Totals Bias: OVER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Kylian Mbappé** (48) — Real Madrid. 12 WC goals in 14 apps. 38 goals this club season. The best tournament player alive. Takes PKs and free kicks.
- **Marcus Thuram** (8) — Inter Milan. Physical target forward — strong in the air, runs the channels, and gives France a different threat through the middle.
- **Ousmane Dembélé** (7) — PSG. Right wing. Pace merchant with improved end product. Direct and effective.
- **Michael Olise** (6) — Bayern Munich. Right wing. Breakout star. Creative and direct.

SET PIECES

PK: Kylian Mbappé · **FK:** Kylian Mbappé · **Corners:** Ousmane Dembélé / Michael Olise (delivery) / Marcus Thuram / Upamécano (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Kylian Mbappé** *Striker / Left forward* — Real Madrid. The most dangerous individual in the draw. Scored 12 WC goals in just 14 appearances. Takes PKs.
- **Rayan Cherki** *Second striker / No. 10* — Manchester City. France's most creative young playmaker — links midfield and attack with vision and dribbling.
- **Aurelien Tchouaméni** *CDM* — Real Madrid. Physical defensive anchor who allows Mbappé and the front line to play freely.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Marcus Thuram** — Inter Milan. Physical target forward, strong in the air. France's primary aerial threat through the middle.
- **William Saliba** — Arsenal CB. Pushes up on set pieces. Physical and aerial. Has scored from corners.

TACTICAL READ

France are the most dangerous team in the draw when it clicks. Mbappé has 12 goals in 14 WC appearances — he could break the all-time tournament record. Group I with Senegal, Norway (Haaland), and Iraq is the toughest group in the draw. France vs. Norway is a marquee group-stage match. Deschamps' pragmatism means France will grind if needed. The squad is absurdly deep — Cherki, Kanté, Mateta all come off the bench. Key risk: Mbappé's Real Madrid form has been inconsistent. If he peaks for the WC, France win it. Market edge: France group overs (Mbappé + Haaland in the same group).

MARKET EDGES

HIGH France vs. Norway over 2.5 goals. Mbappé vs. Haaland in the same match is the most explosive individual matchup in the group stage. Both teams attack. *This is the group-stage match of the tournament from a goals perspective. Buy the over.*

HIGH Mbappé Golden Boot at +600 is the best value in that market. 12 WC goals in 14 apps. If France goes deep, he runs away with it. *France playing potential 7 games with Mbappé healthy = Golden Boot near-lock at this price.*

MEDIUM France to win Group I. Despite Haaland's presence, France have the better squad balance and Deschamps' knockout pedigree guarantees they don't slip up. *Group winner is better value than outright. France at +700 overall is fair.*

Senegal

Group I · Outright +6000 · Win Grp 27.6%

OVERVIEW

Senegal are Africa's most complete team and a legitimate round-of-16 threat. Sadio Mané (34) may have slowed from his Liverpool peak but still brings goals, leadership, and big-game experience from Al-Nassr. Nicolas Jackson (Chelsea, 25) is the emerging striker — physical, mobile, and improving fast. Kalidou Koulibaly (35) and Moussa Niakhaté anchor a physically dominant defense. Ismaïla Sarr provides pace and width. Pape Thiaw's side are defensively disciplined first and counter-attack second. Group I with France and Norway is the hardest possible draw — Senegal need to beat Norway to advance. Totals: NEUTRAL — Senegal are disciplined at the back but have the talent to be clinical.

TOP SCORERS

- **Sadio Mané** (47) — Al Nassr. Senegal's all-time top scorer and captain. 34 years old but still Africa's most dangerous player in big games.
- **Nicolas Jackson** (12) — Chelsea. The future of Senegalese football. Physical, fast, and improving his finishing under Maresca. 25 at the WC.
- **Ismaïla Sarr** (16) — Crystal Palace / Marseille. Lightning-fast wide forward. Direct, scores and creates from the right. Senegal's second attacking threat.
- **Iliman Ndiaye** (9) — Everton. Versatile, technical forward who links play and scores. Provides depth and a different profile behind Mané and Jackson.

SET PIECES

PK: Sadio Mané · **FK:** Sadio Mané · **Corners:** Sadio Mané / Pape Gueye (delivery) / Kalidou Koulibaly, Moussa Niakhaté (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Sadio Mané** *Left wing / second striker* — Still elite in bursts. Takes the big moments — penalties, free kicks near goal, decisive touches. The captain who delivers.
- **Nicolas Jackson** *Centre forward* — Chelsea striker improving every season. Physical and mobile. Senegal's future. If he finds his finishing at the WC, this team goes deep.
- **Ismaïla Sarr** *Right wing* — Frightening pace. Runs at left backs all game. Creates chances and finishes when one-on-one. Senegal's direct wide threat.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Kalidou Koulibaly** — Chelsea / Al Hilal. Dominant in the air at both ends. Pushes forward at corners. Africa's best defender.
- **Nicolas Jackson** — Chelsea striker with good aerial ability for his build. 6'1" and athletic. Second aerial option on corners.

TACTICAL READ

Senegal's 4-3-3 under Pape Thiaw is built on defensive discipline and explosive transitions. They don't concede easily — Koulibaly and Niakhaté are elite — but they're not going to outscore you either. The key question is Nicolas Jackson's finishing. At Chelsea he's shown flashes of elite level — if that translates, Senegal have a real striker threat alongside Mané's experience. Group I is tough: France are the clear group winners. Senegal vs Norway is the second-place decider. Senegal have the defensive quality to keep Norway's build-up quiet. But stopping Haaland is another matter. Back Senegal to advance on defensive quality alone.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Senegal to advance from Group I. Norway is the direct competition for second place. Senegal's defensive structure (Koulibaly-led) can neutralize Norway's midfield even if Haaland scores. *Senegal kept 4 clean sheets in the 2022 WC qualifiers. They're hard to break down.*

MEDIUM Senegal vs Norway under 2.5 goals is a real possibility. Senegal will defend deep and try to nick it. Koulibaly vs Haaland is the matchup of the tournament. *Thiaw plays for results first. Expect a cautious, tactical setup vs Norway.*

MEDIUM Nicolas Jackson anytime scorer in the tournament at +200 or better. He's Chelsea's first-choice striker playing in a system where he gets chances. If he's confident, he scores. *Jackson scored 14 Premier League goals in 2023/24. The quality is there — it's confidence.*

Norway

Group I · Outright +8000 · Win Grp 16%

OVERVIEW

Norway's entire World Cup narrative is Erling Haaland. The Man City striker will be 26 and at the absolute peak of his powers in June 2026. He's the most efficient scorer in the history of European club football, and he arrives at his first World Cup with a point to prove. Martin Ødegaard (Arsenal, 27) is the creative engine behind him. Alexander Sørloth (Atlético Madrid) provides the second striker option. Ståle Solbakken has built Norway around getting the ball to Haaland in dangerous positions. Group I with France and Senegal is brutal — Norway's path hinges on beating Senegal. Totals: OVER — Haaland scores, Norway concede, games are open.

TOP SCORERS

- **Erling Haaland** (34) — Man City. The best striker in the world at 26. His first World Cup. Motivation is maximum. If Norway advance from the group, he wins the Golden Boot.
- **Martin Ødegaard** (19) — Arsenal. The creator. World-class technical midfielder who links play and scores from the No. 8/10 position.
- **Alexander Sørloth** (24) — Atlético Madrid. Physical and direct backup striker. Can start alongside Haaland in a 4-4-2. Powerful finisher.
- **Antonio Nusa** (8) — Club Brugge/RB Leipzig. 20-year-old explosive winger. The breakthrough talent of Norway's next generation.

SET PIECES

PK: Erling Haaland · **FK:** Martin Ødegaard · **Corners:** Martin Ødegaard (delivery) / Erling Haaland, Leo Østigård (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Erling Haaland** *Centre forward* — Man City. Words are inadequate. 85 Premier League goals in 3 seasons. Every team builds the entire game plan around stopping him — which creates space for everyone else.
- **Martin Ødegaard** *Central midfielder* — Arsenal. Elite passing, movement, and goals. Haaland's most important teammate — the man who finds him in the right spaces.
- **Antonio Nusa** *Right wing* — The 20-year-old Barcelona-bound talent. Blistering pace and directness. Gives Norway a second unpredictable threat outside of Haaland.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Erling Haaland** — 6'4". The best aerial striker in world football. Every corner is a danger with Haaland on the back post.
- **Alexander Sørloth** — 6'4" physical forward. Elite in the air. If both Sørloth and Haaland are on the pitch, Norway have the best aerial double threat in the tournament.

TACTICAL READ

Norway are the most binary team in the draw. Haaland scores in bunches or doesn't score at all — there's rarely a middle ground at international level. The system is simple: win the ball, advance quickly, find Haaland in the penalty area. Ødegaard's passing range makes this work. Group I with France means Norway likely needs a draw or win vs Senegal to advance. That's a big ask. But if Norway get out of the group, Haaland in knockout football is terrifying. The Golden Boot market is the best bet in the entire tournament: Haaland is the strongest single-game odds-on scorer at every price point.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Erling Haaland Golden Boot. If Norway get out of the group, he wins it. Even in a tough group, he scores in nearly every game. The best single-player tournament prop available. *Haaland has scored 34 international goals in 31 games. He doesn't stop scoring.*

HIGH Norway vs Senegal OVER 2.5 goals. Both teams need to win. Norway push for Haaland goals. Senegal push on the counter. This game finishes 2-1 or 2-2. *Must-win dynamics produce open, high-scoring games. Both teams have real attacking quality.*

MEDIUM Haaland first scorer vs any opponent at -110 to +110. He scores in every game when Norway are competitive. Back him every match Norway are not heavy underdogs. *Haaland scored in 25 of 36 Premier League appearances in 2023/24. That conversion rate is unreal.*

Iraq

Group I · Outright +50000 · Win Grp 0.7%

OVERVIEW

Iraq qualified via the FIFA Intercontinental Playoff, beating Bolivia 2-1 in Mexico City. Ali Al-Hammadi scored the qualifier-winning goal. Iraq are a compact, disciplined side from the AFC — physical and well-organized defensively, limited in possession. Their group — France, Senegal, Norway — is brutal. France are among the tournament favorites. Iraq's mission is avoiding a heavy goal differential loss while remaining competitive in all three matches. Their Asian football DNA means low-scoring, hard-to-play-against football. Totals: UNDER across the board.

TOP SCORERS

- **Ali Al-Hammadi** (18) — Al Ain (UAE). PK taker. Scored the qualifier-winning goal vs Bolivia. Iraq's main attacker and set piece specialist.
- **Mohanad Ali** (27) — Dibba Al-Fujairah. Iraq's all-time scoring leader with 27 international goals. The captain and experienced forward who leads the line.
- **Aymen Hussein** (15) — Al-Zawra'a (Iraq). Hard-working second striker. Contributes goals from wide positions and on counterattacks.

SET PIECES

PK: Ali Al-Hammadi · **FK:** Ali Al-Hammadi · **Corners:** Ali Al-Hammadi (delivery) / Mohanad Ali, Rebin Sulaka (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Mohanad Ali** *Striker / Captain* — Dibba Al-Fujairah. Iraq's most experienced attacker. 27 international goals. Leads the line physically and provides a target in the box.
- **Ali Al-Hammadi** *Attacking midfielder / Second striker* — Al Ain. PK taker. The most technically skilled player in this squad. Clinical in tight spaces and on dead balls.
- **Zidane Iqbal** *Central midfielder* — FC Utrecht. Press-resistant midfielder who keeps possession in Iraq's own half. Critical for making it hard for France and Norway to press effectively.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Rebin Sulaka** — Swedish-Iraqi international. Physical CB on loan in Europe. Iraq's best aerial option at both ends of the pitch.
- **Mohanad Ali** — Strong in the air for a striker. Iraq's most consistent aerial threat in the opposition box.

TACTICAL READ

Iraq should not be dismissed — they earned their place through a playoff and are defensively organized. But Group I is a nightmare draw. France are +400 tournament favorites. Senegal are a serious side. Norway with Haaland might be their only chance to steal a point. The primary betting angle on Iraq is their defensive resilience in individual matches — can they keep Norway's total under 3? Can they steal a goal against Senegal? This is a survival group for Iraq, not an advancement opportunity.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Iraq vs Norway — under 3.5 goals. Iraq defend compactly and will park the bus. Haaland will get chances but Iraq's low-block is hard to break. Norway don't score 4 against organized defenses. *Iraq's qualifying record: conceded only 14 in 12 matches. They are hard to score against in quantity.*

LOW Mohanad Ali to score in the tournament at long odds. Iraq's 27-goal all-time scorer is motivated on the biggest stage. If Iraq get a set piece in any match, he's their best bet. *Long shot bet — Iraq will have limited chances in Group I. But Mohanad Ali takes his chances when they come.*



Group J

Argentina, Austria, Algeria, Jordan

Argentina

Group J · Outright +800 · Win Grp 37.5%

OVERVIEW

Lionel Scaloni's Argentina play a 4-3-3 / 4-4-2 hybrid built on defensive organization and Messi magic. Defending champions (2022 WC) and 2024 Copa América winners. The core is intact — Martínez in goal, Romero-L.Martínez at CB, Mac Allister-De Paul in midfield. Messi (38) will play limited minutes but remains the heartbeat. Totals Bias: NEUTRAL.

TOP SCORERS

- **Lionel Messi** (109) — Inter Miami. 38 years old. Final World Cup. All-time GOAT. Will play limited minutes but still capable of magic.
- **Lautaro Martínez** (30) — Inter Milan. Primary striker. Physical, clinical in the box. The go-to goal threat.
- **Julián Álvarez** (10) — Atlético Madrid. Versatile forward. Runs channels, presses, scores. Won the 2022 WC Golden Boot as a 22-year-old.
- **Enzo Fernández** (5) — Chelsea. Box-to-box CM. Drives forward, scores from range.

SET PIECES

PK: Lionel Messi / Lautaro Martínez · **FK:** Lionel Messi · **Corners:** Enzo Fernández / Alexis Mac Allister (delivery) / Romero / Otamendi (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Lionel Messi** *Right wing / Free roam* — Inter Miami. Takes PKs and free kicks. Even at 38, commands double teams and creates space for others.
- **Lautaro Martínez** *Striker* — Inter Milan. Primary finisher. Physical, clinical. Takes over PK duties when Messi doesn't.
- **Alexis Mac Allister** *Box-to-box CM* — Liverpool. Pressing engine, scores from distance, delivers corners.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Cristian Romero** — Tottenham CB. Physical, aggressive. Pushes forward on set pieces. Scores headers.
- **Nicolás Otamendi** — Veteran CB. Experienced aerial presence. Has scored crucial international headers.

TACTICAL READ

Argentina are the defending champions with the most tournament-hardened squad in the draw. Scaloni's system is battle-tested across 2022 WC and 2024 Copa América. Emiliano Martínez is the best tournament goalkeeper in the world (PK saves specialist). Group J with Austria (Rangnick's press), Algeria, and Jordan is manageable but not a walkover — Austria are genuinely dangerous. The real edge is Argentina's knockout pedigree. If Messi plays 60-70 minutes per game and stays healthy, Argentina are live to repeat. Market edge: Argentina to advance from Group J is a near-lock.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Argentina to advance from Group J is a near-lock at -400 range. The group is manageable and the squad is too good to go out. *Group advancement is the near-certainty play. Outright at +800 is fair value for the defending champs.*

MEDIUM Messi anytime scorer props in group games at extended odds. Even at 38 playing limited minutes, he takes PKs and free kicks. He scores in big moments. *Any Messi scorer prop above +300 in the group stage has +EV given his role as PK taker.*

MEDIUM Argentina under 2.5 in tough knockout matches. Scaloni's system grinds results — 2022 WC had multiple 1-0 and 2-1 wins. They win ugly. *Apply in Round of 32 if Argentina draw a European team. They neutralize and counter.*

Austria

Group J · Outright +20000 · Win Grp 17.8%

OVERVIEW

Ralf Rangnick has transformed Austria into one of Europe's most disciplined and athletic pressing sides. His gegenpressing 4-2-3-1 suffocates opponents with relentless intensity — every player must press, cover, and carry. Marcel Sabitzer (Dortmund, 30) is the midfield engine: goals from range, press resistance, and work rate. Romano Schmid and Patrick Wimmer provide electric movement from the 10/wing positions. Konrad Laimer (Bayern Munich) brings intensity and coverage. David Alaba (Real Madrid) is the wildcard — if fit and back to 100%, he elevates this squad significantly. Totals: OVER — Rangnick's teams press high, create chances, and live in the opponent's half. Games are open.

TOP SCORERS

- **Marcel Sabitzer** (16) — Borussia Dortmund. Austria's best player. Goals from midfield, long-range shots, and an engine that never stops. The heart of Rangnick's system.
- **Romano Schmid** (7) — Werder Bremen. Athletic and direct from the No. 10 position. Goals and assists. A genuine modern number 10.
- **Michael Gregoritsch** (16) — Freiburg. Physical striker. Clinical finisher with good movement. Austria's most natural goalscorer.
- **Marko Arnautović** (36) — Likely retired / fringe. Austria's all-time top scorer. May feature as a late game option even at 37.

SET PIECES

PK: Marcel Sabitzer · **FK:** Marcel Sabitzer · **Corners:** Marcel Sabitzer / Florian Grillitsch (delivery) / David Alaba, Michael Gregoritsch (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Marcel Sabitzer** *Central midfielder* — Dortmund. The most important Austrian player. Presses like a winger, scores like a 10, and covers like a 6. Rangnick's perfect player.
- **Paul Wanner** *Attacking midfielder* — Bayern Munich. Highly rated young playmaker — direct, mobile, and technically clean. Creates from the half-space. Austria's creative hub.
- **Patrick Wimmer** *Right wing* — Wolfsburg. Lightning pace and directness. Rangnick uses wide players as pressing triggers — Wimmer is the best at this role.

AERIAL THREATS

- **David Alaba** — Real Madrid. World-class in the air. Austria's best aerial weapon at set pieces if fit. The most technically complete Austrian ever.
- **Michael Gregoritsch** — Freiburg. Austria's most physical forward option. Strong in the air and battles for every ball. Main aerial option up front.

TACTICAL READ

Rangnick's Austria are arguably the most tactically advanced underdog in the draw. His pressing system requires elite fitness and collective discipline — Rangnick took Austria from ranked 30th to top 15 in Europe. Games involving Austria are usually high-tempo, high-chances, and open. Group J with Argentina is the challenge. If they get a softer draw for the other two games, Austria can advance. Sabitzer is the key: when he's at his Dortmund best, Austria's midfield is genuinely competitive with anyone. At +20000, there's real value in Austria to advance from the group if their group draw is kind to them.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Austria group games overs. Rangnick's teams press constantly and create open games. Austria concede because they commit bodies forward. Back overs in every Austria group game — especially vs teams ranked outside the top 20. *Austria averaged 2.9 goals per game in Euro 2024 qualifying. Rangnick doesn't change his philosophy.*

MEDIUM Marcel Sabitzer to score in the tournament at +180 or better. He scores long-range goals and from set pieces regularly for Dortmund. Austria build through him — he's the best bet on this team. *Sabitzer scored 8 goals for Dortmund in 2023/24. He finds the net in big moments.*

MEDIUM Austria to advance from the group if they avoid a top-5 team in the other games. At +800 to advance, that's live money if the draw gives them two winnable games outside of Argentina. *Rangnick's record in qualifying: 14W 2D 0L. Austria are well-drilled and believe in the system.*

Algeria

Group J · Outright +30000 · Win Grp 15.9%

OVERVIEW

Les Fennecs under Vladimir Petkovic are rebuilding around the post-Mahrez generation, but Riyad Mahrez (Al-Ahli Saudi Arabia) at 35 is the last and best reason to watch this Algeria side. Mahrez is still world class — scoring at will in Saudi, creating at his natural pace, technically immaculate. Housseem Aouar (Roma) provides the midfield control. Mohamed Amoura (Wolfsburg) is the pacy attacking threat. Algeria won AFCON 2019, reached the final in 2023 — this is an experienced, well-drilled continental side. Group J with Argentina, Austria, and Jordan: Algeria are fighting Austria for second place, and the football intellect around Mahrez makes them dangerous. Totals: NEUTRAL — they can score but they also concede.

TOP SCORERS

- **Riyad Mahrez** (40) — Al-Ahli Saudi Arabia (ex-Man City). At 35, still technically the most gifted player Algeria have ever had. His dribbling, finishing, and free kick quality remain extraordinary. Scored 18 goals in his first Saudi Pro League season. This is his World Cup farewell.
- **Mohamed Amoura** (14) — VfL Wolfsburg. Pacy, direct forward — Algeria's most dangerous runner in behind. Scores and creates at Bundesliga level.
- **Amine Gouiri** (8) — Marseille. Mobile centre-forward who links play and finishes. Algeria's modern No. 9 alongside Mahrez's creativity.

SET PIECES

PK: Riyad Mahrez · **FK:** Riyad Mahrez · **Corners:** Riyad Mahrez / Farès Chaïbi (delivery) / Aïssa Mandi (aerial target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Riyad Mahrez** *Right winger / No. 10* — Al-Ahli. Everything Algeria create in the final third runs through his brain. His movement draws double teams, his delivery is still elite. Petkovic plays the system around protecting Mahrez's energy while maximizing his impact in key moments.
- **Housseem Aouar** *Central midfielder* — Roma. Press resistance, passing range, positional intelligence — he gives Algeria a refined engine room alongside Mahrez.
- **Farès Chaïbi** *Right midfielder / Winger* — Eintracht Frankfurt. The right-side outlet. Drives forward, creates, and delivers. Combines with Mahrez on the right for Algeria's best combination play.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Aïssa Mandi** — Experienced centre back who attacks back-post corners. Physical in the air. Algeria's primary set piece danger from the back.
- **Riyad Mahrez** — Despite being slight at 5'10", Mahrez attacks the near post at corners for flick-ons. His movement at set pieces is as dangerous as his delivery.

TACTICAL READ

Petkovic knows his Algeria side is transitional — the 2019 AFCON generation is aging out and the replacements are not fully ready. But Mahrez does not age like normal players. At 35 he is essentially a free kick merchant and final-third organizer. Housseem Aouar is the most important midfielder tactically alongside Mahrez. Group J: Argentina win it, Austria and Algeria fight for second. Mahrez vs Austria's back four is the pivotal match. If Algeria get the right draw in the Round of 16, they can cause a result.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Algeria to advance from Group J at +180 or better. Austria are their direct competitor but Algeria have Mahrez plus a Bundesliga-and-Ligue-1 core in Amoura, Aouar, and Gouiri. They should finish above Austria. *Austria EURO 2024: impressed but lost to Turkey in the Round of 16. Algeria's experience and technical quality around Mahrez is underrated.*

MEDIUM Riyad Mahrez free kick goal in the tournament at +500. He scores free kicks — still. 18 goals in Saudi last season included multiple from dead balls at 35. At this price it is value. *Mahrez free kick accuracy at 35: still curling, still dangerous. He will take 3-4 free kicks in Group J proximity.*

HIGH Algeria vs Jordan Over 2.5 goals. Jordan are technically limited and will leave space on the counter. Algeria should win this 3-0 or 2-1. Mahrez scores, Amoura scores. *Jordan's defensive structure is middle-tier Asian level. Mahrez against that quality should produce at least 2 goals.*

Jordan

Group J · Outright +75000 · Win Grp 3.7%

OVERVIEW

Jordan are making their first World Cup appearance and the entire nation is in shock — in the best way. Coach Jamal Sellami has built a disciplined 4-4-2 that relies on defensive organization and direct attacking play. Mousa Tamari (Stade Brest) is the standout — a Liga 1 regular who provides genuine European-quality pace and dribbling on the left wing. Jordan qualified through Asian playoffs and deserve enormous credit. Group J with Argentina, Algeria, and Austria is as tough as draws get. Their realistic target is a performance against Algeria and keeping it respectable against Argentina. Totals: UNDER — Sellami teams are defensive by necessity.

TOP SCORERS

- **Mousa Tamari** (16) — Stade Brest (Ligue 1). The revelation of Jordanian football. Plays regularly in France's top flight for a Champions League qualifier. Quick, direct, and dangerous in space. At a World Cup, his pace will be a real problem even for good defenses.
- **Ali Olwan** (8) — Striker who leads the line for Jordan. Clever in the box and effective at the level Jordan face — their main goal threat alongside Tamari.
- **Nizar Al-Rashdan** (4) — Combative central midfielder. Works hard, wins second balls, and provides the platform for Tamari to get forward.

SET PIECES

PK: Mousa Tamari · **FK:** Mousa Tamari / Ali Olwan · **Corners:** Mousa Tamari (delivery) / Ali Olwan, Abdallah Nasib (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Mousa Tamari** *Left winger / Second striker* — Stade Brest. The only player in this squad with genuine European club football quality. Plays against Ligue 1 defenses weekly. His pace and directness will cause problems for any team who tries to defend high against Jordan.
- **Ali Olwan** *Centre forward* — The reference point up front. Hardworking and intelligent. His movement creates the space Tamari exploits on the counter.
- **Yazeed Abulaila** *Goalkeeper* — Jordan's goalkeeper and a consistent performer in qualifying. Several match-winning saves on the road to the World Cup. Tamari scores, Abulaila saves — Jordan's two key men.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Yazan Al-Arab** — Centre back who attacks corners and direct free kicks. Set pieces are Jordan's best realistic path to goals against top teams.
- **Abdallah Nasib** — Centre back who pushes forward at set pieces. Physical and aerial. Jordan drill set piece routines specifically because their open-play quality against top teams is limited.

TACTICAL READ

Sellami's Jordan are playing with house money. They have no World Cup history and no pressure beyond national pride. The tactical setup will be purely defensive — 4-4-2 low block, win second balls, give Tamari room to counter. Against Argentina this is Messi vs a bus. Against Algeria there is a competitive game. Against Austria there is a chance. The Tamari vs Austria matchup is the one worth watching — Rangnick's high press vs a player with Ligue 1 pace. Jordan can score.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Mousa Tamari to score at the World Cup (anytime in group stage) at +250. He plays Ligue 1, he scores, and Jordan will sit back giving him counter-attacking space. *Tamari: 8 Ligue 1 goals in 2024/25 for Brest. He will get 3-4 counter-attacking opportunities in Group J. Back him to convert one.*

MEDIUM Jordan vs Austria Under 2.5 goals. Sellami teams sit deep and Jordan will not open up. Austria play through possession but will not tear through a parked defense easily. *Austria EURO 2024: only 2 games over 2.5 goals in 5 matches. Rangnick teams do not run up scores.*

LOW Jordan to not concede 4+ goals in any single group game. Sellami defensive organization limits damage. Jordan reached the Asian Cup 2023 final while conceding very little. *Jordan in Asian Cup 2023: reached the final and conceded under 2 goals per game on average. Their defensive structure holds even against stronger opposition.*



Group K

Portugal, Colombia, Uzbekistan, DR Congo

Portugal

Group K · Outright +1400 · Win Grp 37.5%

OVERVIEW

Roberto Martínez's Portugal blend tournament-hardened veterans with elite club talent. Cristiano Ronaldo (41) makes his 6th World Cup — even diminished, he's in the squad and will score. But Bruno Fernandes is the real engine: the captain, the creator, the difference-maker. Bernardo Silva, Rafael Leão, and Pedro Neto provide world-class width. Rúben Dias and António Silva anchor a strong defensive unit. Group K with Colombia, Uzbekistan, and DR Congo is very winnable. Totals: OVER — Portugal's attacking depth generates goals at volume.

TOP SCORERS

- **Cristiano Ronaldo** (130) — Al Nassr. All-time leading international scorer. Will be 41 but still clinical in the box. 6th World Cup.
- **Bruno Fernandes** (28) — Man United captain. The real engine of this Portugal team. Goals, assists, and leadership.
- **Rafael Leão** (16) — AC Milan. Explosive left winger. Pace to burn and moments of brilliance. Portugal's X-factor.
- **Pedro Neto** (12) — Chelsea. Sharp right winger who creates and finishes. Underrated on the world stage.

SET PIECES

PK: Cristiano Ronaldo · **FK:** Bruno Fernandes · **Corners:** Bruno Fernandes / Bernardo Silva (delivery) / Rúben Dias, Cristiano Ronaldo (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Bruno Fernandes** *Attacking midfielder* — Portugal's best player. Drives forward, creates chances, scores from distance. The captain who elevates the squad.
- **Rafael Leão** *Left wing* — AC Milan. Fastest player in the squad. When he's on, Portugal are a different team — direct, dangerous, explosive.
- **Bernardo Silva** *Right wing / CM* — Man City. The complete midfielder — presses, creates, scores. The most technically refined player in the squad.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Cristiano Ronaldo** — Still elite in the air at 41. Scores headers. Set piece weapon even at this age.
- **Rúben Dias** — Manchester City. Portugal's best CB. Pushes forward at corners. Physical and dominant in the air.

TACTICAL READ

Portugal are a genuine title contender if Bruno Fernandes is in form. The squad has elite depth — Leão, Neto, Bernardo, Vitinha, Rúben Neves, Cancelo — this is a proper 25-man squad, not Ronaldo + 10. Martínez sets up in a 4-3-3 that morphs into 4-2-3-1. Portugal's group is the most winnable draw in Europe's allocation. The market prices them correctly at +1400 — they're a legitimate QF/SF team. The value: Portugal to reach the semi-finals (+EV at most books) and Leão to score anytime in the tournament.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Portugal to reach the semi-finals is underpriced. Group K is soft, and they have the squad depth to beat anyone not named Spain or England over 90 minutes. *The knockout bracket matters. If Portugal avoids Spain until the SF, they're a genuine finalist.*

HIGH Rafael Leão to score in the tournament at +120 to +150 is a strong EV play. He plays every minute when fit, has a clinical finish, and Portugal generate volume. *Leão had 15 Serie A goal contributions in his last full season. World Cup pace suits him.*

MEDIUM Bruno Fernandes assists leader prop. He's the orchestrator of the entire attack — if Portugal go deep, Fernandes tops the assists chart. *Fernandes averaged 0.4 assists per WC qualifying game. At a deep run that's 5-6 tournament assists.*

Colombia

Group K · Outright +5000 · Win Grp 33.8%

OVERVIEW

Colombia are legitimate dark horses after finishing runners-up at Copa América 2024. Néstor Lorenzo has built an exciting, fearless team. Luis Díaz (Liverpool, 28) is one of the best left wingers in the world — direct, skilful, and clutch. James Rodríguez (34) — if selected — is still the creative anchor in a deeper role. Richard Ríos (Palmeiras) has emerged as one of South America's best midfielders. Jhon Arias (Fluminense) provides energy and goals from the right. Group K with Portugal, Uzbekistan, and DR Congo — Colombia fights Portugal for the top spot. Totals: OVER — Colombia play with intensity and create high volumes of chances.

TOP SCORERS

- **Luis Díaz** (24) — Liverpool. World-class left winger. Direct, fast, and clinical. Colombia's best player and the tournament's dark horse breakout candidate.
- **Jhon Córdoba** (18) — Krasnodar. Physical centre forward. Strong in the air and reliable finisher at international level.
- **James Rodríguez** (34) — Rayo Vallecano / free agent. Still Colombia's most creative player at 34. Runs games when fit and motivated.
- **Richard Ríos** (9) — Palmeiras. One of South America's best midfielders. Scores from range, covers the ground, and runs the show.

SET PIECES

PK: Jhon Córdoba · **FK:** James Rodríguez · **Corners:** James Rodríguez (delivery) / Jhon Córdoba, Davinson Sánchez (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Luis Díaz** *Left wing* — Liverpool. The standout. Runs at defenders all game, creates and scores. If Colombia go deep, Díaz is the reason.
- **James Rodríguez** *Attacking midfielder* — The maestro at 34. Slowed physically but the vision and passing quality are still elite. Colombia's best when he's in the team.
- **Jhon Arias** *Right wing / AM* — Fluminense. Two-footed, hardworking, scores and creates. The engine who allows Díaz to express himself.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Jhon Córdoba** — Colombia's best aerial option. Physical and strong in the box. Set piece weapon on corners.
- **Davinson Sánchez** — Spurs CB. Pushes forward at corners. Physical and committed. Scores important goals at international level.

TACTICAL READ

Colombia are the value bet at +5000. Copa América 2024 runners-up with a squad that's still improving. They only lost the final to Argentina. Díaz is the key: if he's at his Liverpool best, Colombia can beat anyone. Lorenzo sets up in a 4-3-3 that transitions quickly and presses high. Group K is the best draw in CONMEBOL's allocation — they have to beat Portugal for the top spot, but Uzbekistan and the 4th qualifier are wins. The dark horse narrative is real. Market edge: Colombia to advance from Group K and Luis Díaz anytime scorer props at every group game.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Luis Díaz to score in the tournament is nearly a lock. He's Liverpool's first-choice left winger playing in a system built for him. At +EV prices, back him in every group game. *Díaz scored 13 Premier League goals in 2023/24 and was Copa América's standout wide player.*

HIGH Colombia to advance from Group K. The draw favors them. Even if Portugal win the group, Colombia comfortably take second over Uzbekistan. No value in the group being an upset — Colombia advance. *Colombia went 28 games unbeaten under Lorenzo heading into 2026. That's a legitimate run.*

MEDIUM Colombia dark horse to reach the QF at +1200 or better. Copa América 2024 showed they can go deep in a serious tournament. In the knockout format, Díaz and Ríos give them an upset chance. *The path from Group K to QF is navigable. Colombia beat a mid-tier European side and they're in the QF.*

Uzbekistan

Group K · Outright +40000 · Win Grp 4.4%

OVERVIEW

Uzbekistan under Fabio Cannavaro have become the most interesting Central Asian football story in a generation. Cannavaro — Ballon d'Or winner, World Cup winner — transformed the White Wolves into a technically sophisticated side capable of beating anyone in Asia. Abdukodir Khusanov (Manchester City) is the standout: a ball-playing centre back who plays regularly for Pep Guardiola's champions. Eldor Shomurodov (Roma) is the striker. Jaloliddin Masharipov provides the width and creativity. Group K with Portugal and Colombia is steep — but Uzbekistan are not here to make up the numbers. They qualified on merit and have a genuine case for second place over Colombia. Totals: NEUTRAL — Cannavaro teams build from the back and can score.

TOP SCORERS

- **Eldor Shomurodov** (28) — Roma (Serie A). The most accomplished striker Central Asian football has produced. Serie A regular who scores and creates at the highest domestic European level. Physical, mobile, and intelligent off the ball. If Uzbekistan get to the Round of 16, he is the reason.
- **Jaloliddin Masharipov** (14) — CSKA Moscow. The technical creator. Left-footed midfielder who runs the possession game when Uzbekistan have the ball. His ball-playing intelligence is what Cannavaro has built his system around.
- **Igor Sergeev** (6) — Pakhtakor. Domestic-league striker who provides backup for Shomurodov. Physical and direct. Less technical but hardworking.

SET PIECES

PK: Eldor Shomurodov · **FK:** Jaloliddin Masharipov · **Corners:** Masharipov (delivery) / Eldor Shomurodov, Abdukodir Khusanov (aerial targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Eldor Shomurodov** *Centre forward* — Roma. Physical striker with Bundesliga-level movement, can hurt you in the air and on the ground. Cannavaro has built attacks around his movement. At 30, this is his peak World Cup moment.
- **Abdukodir Khusanov** *Centre back / Ball carrier* — Manchester City. The most remarkable thing about this Uzbekistan team. A centre back trained by Pep Guardiola, playing in the Premier League champions' defense. His ability to step out and carry the ball is unprecedented at this level for a Central Asian nation. He literally makes this team tactically different from any other Asian team.
- **Jaloliddin Masharipov** *Left attacking midfielder* — The creator. Cannavaro's Xavi — the player who dictates tempo and finds the passes that make Uzbekistan's attacks work. His relationship with Shomurodov in the final third is their most dangerous combination.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Eldor Shomurodov** — 6'1". Aerial quality is a key part of his game — scored headed goals for Roma. Cannavaro targets him on far-post deliveries.
- **Abdukodir Khusanov** — Manchester City centre back who attacks corners. Guardiola has trained him to step forward into dangerous areas. An unusual attacking weapon from the back.

TACTICAL READ

Cannavaro's system is a 4-3-3 that builds from Khusanov at the back: the centre back steps into midfield, Masharipov drops to receive and face forward, Shomurodov pins the last defender. It is recognizable Guardiola-influenced football in miniature. Group K is Portugal and Colombia. Ronaldo at 41 playing for Portugal: either spectacular or over. Colombia are strong but inconsistent. Uzbekistan's path to the Round of 16 is real — beat Portugal on a day Ronaldo does not perform, draw Colombia, and qualify second. At +40000 odds this team is the value pick at the tournament for outright bets. Khusanov at Man City is not a fluke — he is genuinely elite.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Uzbekistan to advance from Group K at +400 or better. Colombia are inconsistent. Portugal at 2026 are an aging squad beyond Ronaldo. Cannavaro's system is sophisticated and Khusanov (Man City) is a legitimate world-class player. *Uzbekistan beat South Korea (WC regulars) in Asian qualification. Cannavaro has a real tactical blueprint. Do not sleep on this team.*

MEDIUM Abdukodir Khusanov named to the Group K Team of the Tournament at +600. He plays for Man City under Guardiola. He is the best player in this group on a pure club football basis. His World Cup performance will get attention. *Khusanov: regular Man City starter in the Premier League. Guardiola trusts him. That matters enormously at this level.*

MEDIUM Uzbekistan vs Colombia Over 2.5 goals. Both teams are mid-level attack-focused sides who need points. Colombia will not sit back against Uzbekistan. Shomurodov and Masharipov can score. This is a 2-1 or 2-2 type game. *Colombia in CONMEBOL qualifying: 7 of 12 games went over 2.5 goals. They concede and score. Uzbekistan with Shomurodov can match their tempo.*

DR Congo

Group K · Outright +75000 · Win Grp 4.4%

OVERVIEW

DR Congo qualified via the FIFA Intercontinental Playoff, beating Jamaica 1-0 after extra time in Mexico City. The Leopards are AFCON veterans — a physical, athletic side built on energy and defensive discipline. Yoane Wissa (Brentford) is their most dangerous weapon: direct, powerful, and capable of individual brilliance. Cédric Bakambu (Galatasaray) provides veteran quality and takes penalties. Group K — Portugal, Colombia, Uzbekistan — is very difficult. Portugal are group favorites. DR Congo need to beat Uzbekistan and try to upset Colombia. Totals: UNDER — DRC are pragmatic and defensive-first.

TOP SCORERS

- **Yoane Wissa** (16) — Brentford (Premier League). DR Congo's most technically gifted attacker. Direct, quick, and capable of scoring from nothing. The player opposition defenses must account for.
- **Cédric Bakambu** (22) — Galatasaray. PK taker. Veteran forward and experienced campaigner. Bakambu has played in La Liga, the Chinese Super League, and Turkey — he's seen everything. Takes his chances.
- **Fiston Mayele** (10) — Pyramids FC. Physical, mobile striker who works the channels and creates space for Wissa and Bakambu. CAF Champions League top scorer.

SET PIECES

PK: Cédric Bakambu · **FK:** Cédric Bakambu / Yoane Wissa · **Corners:** Yoane Wissa / Arthur Masuaku (delivery) / Chancel Mbemba, Bakambu (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Yoane Wissa** *Striker / Wide forward* — Brentford. The most dangerous player. Pace, directness, and an eye for goal from either side of the box. Brentford's attacking catalyst — a tough match-up for any fullback.
- **Cédric Bakambu** *Striker* — Galatasaray. PK taker. Veteran presence. Scores goals with efficiency and positions well in the box. DR Congo's set piece leader.
- **Chancel Mbemba** *Central defender* — Marseille. DRC's best defender. Physical, commanding, and a leader at the back. His form will determine how many goals DRC concede.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Chancel Mbemba** — Marseille CB. Physical and dominant. DR Congo's aerial anchor — dangerous at both ends on set pieces.
- **Cédric Bakambu** — Strong target man in the air. Creates problems for defenders on crosses and corners.

TACTICAL READ

DR Congo qualified through grit — a 1-0 win in extra time says everything about their style. They'll defend in numbers and rely on Wissa's individual quality on the counter. Against Uzbekistan, they are favorites. Against Colombia and Portugal, they're significant underdogs. The path to advancement requires beating Uzbekistan convincingly and getting a result from either Portugal or Colombia. Portugal's depth makes them near-untouchable. Colombia are beatable. If DRC keep it tight vs Colombia (low block, frustrate them) and Wissa gets one chance, an upset is possible.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Yoane Wissa anytime scorer vs Uzbekistan. DRC are heavy favorites in this match-up and Wissa is their primary attack weapon. He creates his own shots. *Wissa scored 12+ goals at Premier League level this season. Against Uzbekistan's defensive setup, he should get clean looks.*

MEDIUM DR Congo vs Colombia — under 2.5 goals. DRC will defend deep. Colombia are good but not clinical enough to blow open a disciplined low-block. Expect a tight match. *DRC's qualifying: conceded just 12 goals in 12 games. They are a hard team to score against in quantity.*

LOW Cédric Bakambu to score in the tournament at long odds. He's the PK taker and a veteran who scores at every level. If DRC earn a penalty, he converts. *Bakambu has scored in AFCON tournaments at a high rate. His experience on big stages is underrated.*



Group L

England, Croatia, Ghana, Panama

England

Group L · Outright +550 · Win Grp 39%

OVERVIEW

Thomas Tuchel's England play a structured 3-4-2-1 / 4-2-3-1 that prioritizes defensive solidity. Tuchel was appointed Jan 2025 after Southgate's resignation post-Euro 2024 final loss. Pragmatic, organized, built around Bellingham as the creative fulcrum. The most talented squad in the draw on paper. Totals Bias: UNDER.

TOP SCORERS

- **Harry Kane** (68) — Bayern Munich. England's all-time top scorer. Takes PKs. Clinical in the box. The focal point of everything.
- **Bukayo Saka** (12) — Arsenal. Right wing. Creates, assists, scores. Reliable in big moments. One of the best in Europe.
- **Jude Bellingham** (10) — Real Madrid. The best midfielder in the world. Box-to-box, scores from deep, generates chances.
- **Eberechi Eze** (6) — Arsenal. Creative left-sided forward — drifts inside, dribbles, and scores. England's most inventive attacking option off the bench.

SET PIECES

PK: Harry Kane · **FK:** Jude Bellingham / Declan Rice · **Corners:** Bukayo Saka / Declan Rice (delivery) / Harry Kane / John Stones (target)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Jude Bellingham** *No. 10 / Box-to-box* — Real Madrid. The heartbeat of England's midfield. Scores, creates, leads. Tuchel's system is built around him.
- **Bukayo Saka** *Right wing* — Arsenal. Creates and finishes. Reliable in big moments. Delivers corners.
- **Harry Kane** *Striker* — Bayern Munich. Clinical in the box. PK taker. England's all-time scorer. Everything goes through him.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Harry Kane** — Not just a finisher — also dangerous in the air. Scores headers from crosses and corners.
- **John Stones** — Man City CB. Pushes forward on set pieces. Has scored crucial international goals from corners.

TACTICAL READ

England are the eternal underperformers who keep getting closer — Euro 2020 final loss, Euro 2024 final loss. Tuchel brings tactical discipline that Southgate lacked. Group L with Croatia, Ghana, and Panama should be straightforward — but Croatia (Modrić's last dance) are a dangerous 4th-seeded team. Key risk: Tuchel's squad selection is bold. Bellingham and Reece James have injury concerns. If fully fit, this is the deepest squad in the tournament. The market edge is England to reach the semis at plus-money — they have the talent to go further than any previous iteration.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH England to reach the semifinals at plus-money is the best tournament market for England. They have the squad to go deep and Tuchel provides the tactical discipline Southgate lacked. *The two consecutive finals show England can close. Tuchel's track record in knockouts (UCL 2021) is the edge.*

HIGH Harry Kane Golden Boot at +650 is excellent value. He's England's all-time scorer, takes PKs, and England could play 7 games. Bayern form is elite. *Kane at +650 is one of the best value plays in the Golden Boot market.*

MEDIUM England under 2.5 in group matches vs. Croatia and Ghana. Tuchel prioritizes defensive structure. England will win 1-0 and 2-0 more than 4-0. *Tuchel's Chelsea conceded very little and scored efficiently. Same approach with England.*

Croatia

Group L · Outright +2500 · Win Grp 34.1%

OVERVIEW

Croatia under Zlatko Dalić have produced two of the greatest World Cup runs in tournament history — 2018 finalists, 2022 third place. Luka Modrić (41) plays his final World Cup as a legend of the game. The new generation has arrived: Joško Gvardiol (Man City, 25) is one of the best defenders in the world. Luka Sučić is the heir to the midfield. Mateo Kovačić (36) and Nikola Moro provide the engine. Andrej Kramarić and Ante Budimir are reliable finishers. Group L with England, Ghana, and Panama — Croatia needs to beat Ghana to advance. Totals: UNDER — the Croatian way is compact, disciplined, and relentlessly tough to break down.

TOP SCORERS

- **Andrej Kramarić** (21) — Hoffenheim. Croatia's most reliable finisher. Clinical in the box, works the channels, scores in big games.
- **Ante Budimir** (12) — Osasuna. Physically strong target striker. Hold-up play, link-up, and goals from the second line.
- **Luka Modrić** (24) — Real Madrid / retirement age. The legend. Won't start every game at 41 but will feature. The emotional heart of the squad.
- **Joško Gvardiol** (8) — Man City. Set piece threat from CB. Scores important goals. Croatia's best player in 2026.

SET PIECES

PK: Andrej Kramarić · **FK:** Luka Modrić · **Corners:** Luka Modrić / Mateo Kovačić (delivery) / Joško Gvardiol, Ante Budimir (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Luka Modrić** *Central midfielder* — Real Madrid. At 41, a different player — but the vision and weight of pass are still unmatched. Manages games rather than runs them.
- **Mateo Kovačić** *Central midfielder* — Man City. The physical engine. Box-to-box, presses, covers, creates. Croatia's workhorse at 36.
- **Joško Gvardiol** *Left back / CB* — Man City. The world's best left back. Drives forward, creates, defends like a wall. The best player on this team.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Ante Budimir** — Physically imposing striker. Croatia's best aerial target. Draws fouls and wins headers in the box.
- **Joško Gvardiol** — Man City. One of the best headers of the ball in the world from the left CB position. Major set piece threat.

TACTICAL READ

Croatia's formula is understood by everyone and beaten by almost no one. Deep defensive block, midfield control through Kovačić and Modrić, then break through the flanks or set pieces. Gvardiol has made them genuinely dangerous going forward in a way they never were before. The 2022 run showed this squad can beat anyone on a given day — they knocked out Brazil and Japan in the knockouts. Group L is the challenge: England are the clear group winners. The battle is Croatia vs Ghana for second. Bet Croatia to advance. The market underestimates Croatian tournament resilience every single time.

MARKET EDGES

HIGH Croatia to advance from Group L. Ghana are solid but Croatia's tournament experience and defensive discipline make them the more dangerous knockout team. Back Croatia over Ghana for second place. *Croatia have reached the knockouts in every World Cup since 2018. That doesn't happen by accident.*

HIGH Group L unders. Croatia vs Ghana and Croatia vs Panama will both be sub-2.5 goal games. Croatian defensive identity produces unders at a high rate. *Croatia allowed 1.0 goals per game in 2022 WC group stage. Kovačić/Moro midfield protection is elite.*

MEDIUM Joško Gvardiol to score in the tournament. He scores from set pieces and is Man City's most complete defender. At +300 or better, it's worth a unit. *Gvardiol scored in the 2022 WC. At Man City he's become a genuine attacking threat from the left.*

Ghana

Group L · Outright +25000 · Win Grp 5.4%

OVERVIEW

Ghana's 2026 attack is led by captain Jordan Ayew and the pace of Iñaki Williams (Athletic Bilbao) — who chose Ghana over Spain — giving them a direct, physical front line. Kamaldeen Sulemana and Abdul Fatawu add dribbling threat from wide. Thomas Partey (Arsenal, 32) is the defensive anchor when fit — his availability is everything. Antoine Semenyo (Bournemouth) provides direct, physical pace on the wing. Group L with England, Croatia, and Panama — Ghana's realistic target is second place in a battle with Croatia. Totals: NEUTRAL — Ghana can attack but are vulnerable defensively.

TOP SCORERS

- **Kamaldeen Sulemana** (8) — Atalanta. Explosive, direct winger — pace and dribbling to beat defenders. One of Ghana's main attacking threats across the front line.
- **Jordan Ayew** (22) — Crystal Palace / elsewhere. Ghana's experienced striker. International pedigree, holds the line, and scores important goals.
- **Antoine Semenyo** (10) — Bournemouth. Powerful and direct. Pure pace right winger who can beat defenders and score or assist.
- **Inaki Williams** (12) — Athletic Bilbao. Chose Ghana over Spain. Fast and mobile striker who gives Ghana an alternative physical option.

SET PIECES

PK: Jordan Ayew · **FK:** Jordan Ayew · **Corners:** Jordan Ayew / Kamaldeen Sulemana (delivery) / Thomas Partey, Abdul Mumin (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Jordan Ayew** *Forward / Second striker* — Crystal Palace. Captain and focal point — holds up play, links the attack, and takes Ghana's penalties and free kicks.
- **Inaki Williams** *Centre forward / right wing* — Athletic Bilbao. Frightening pace and physicality. Gives Ghana a completely different option up front — direct and powerful.
- **Antoine Semenyo** *Left wing / right wing* — Bournemouth. Explosive pace and direct running. Creates and scores in a simple but effective wide role.

AERIAL THREATS

- **Inaki Williams** — Athletic Bilbao. Good in the air for his size. Battles physically. Ghana's best aerial option at set pieces.
- **Abdul Mumin** — Rayo Vallecano CB. Experienced and physical, pushes forward at corners. Ghana's most reliable aerial presence from defensive positions.

TACTICAL READ

Ghana have the pieces to advance from Group L in a different draw. In this draw, with England and Croatia, they need a near-perfect performance vs Croatia. Inaki Williams and a fit Thomas Partey are the difference-makers. Partey's fitness is the swing variable — with him fit, Ghana are organized and hard to beat. Without him, the midfield is exposed. England will win this group. The second-place battle with Croatia is the real market. Croatia have tournament experience on their side. Ghana are the upset value: if Partey plays and the front line clicks, back Ghana to advance.

MARKET EDGES

MEDIUM Inaki Williams to score in the tournament at +160 or better. He's a La Liga regular at Athletic Bilbao and Ghana's most direct striker — at a major tournament he gets minutes, touches, and chances. *Williams brings genuine top-five-league pace and physicality. Ghana will look to spring him in behind.*

LOW Ghana to advance over Croatia is the speculative bet. If Partey is fit and the front line is firing, Ghana's athletic advantage over aging Croatian legs is real. Long odds, real possibility. *Ghana's average age will be 25 vs Croatia's 30+. Youth and pace can win knockout battles.*

LOW Ghana group games total goals markets. Ghana concede AND score. Their games are more open than the odds suggest — back overs in the Ghana vs Panama game specifically. *Ghana vs Panama is a match both teams need to win. Expect an open, attacking game.*

Panama

Group L · Outright +50000 · Win Grp 2.5%

OVERVIEW

Panama are Group L's designated heavy underdogs alongside England, Croatia, and Ghana. This is a squad built entirely on work rate, organization, and set piece threats — not individual quality. Cecilio Waterman and José Fajardo provide their best goal threat. The entire team defends with maximum commitment and looks to exploit transitions. Reaching the 2026 World Cup is the achievement — the expanded 48-team format opened the door for CONCACAF. Advancing from this group would rank among the greatest upsets in World Cup history. Totals: UNDER — Panama will park the bus and defend. Every game.

TOP SCORERS

- **Ismael Díaz** (9) — Panama's most reliable goal threat — clever movement and finishing in the box. A handful for tired defenders.
- **Cecilio Waterman** (10) — Panamá / MLS. Experienced attacker. Direct running, physical play. Panama's second genuine goal threat.
- **José Luis Rodríguez** (5) — Winger with goals. Panama's option from wide areas and second-ball situations.
- **José Fajardo** (7) — Los Angeles FC. MLS-based winger. Physical and direct. Panama's best when they can counter-attack.

SET PIECES

PK: Éric Davis · **FK:** Éric Davis · **Corners:** Éric Davis / Adalberto Carrasquilla (delivery) / José Córdoba, Roderick Miller (targets)

SHOT CREATORS

- **Ismael Díaz** *Centre forward / Second striker* — Panama's main focal point in attack. Clever movement, works the channels, and takes on the physical battle with world-class defenders.
- **Cecilio Waterman** *Right wing* — Direct and physical. Best when Panama can counter-attack and he has space to run into. The transition threat.
- **José Fajardo** *Left wing* — MLS-based. Brings energy and pace. Panama's most direct wide option when they go long.

AERIAL THREATS

- **José Córdoba** — Norwich City CB. Physical aerial presence — Panama's best at set pieces. Scores headers in qualifying.
- **Roderick Miller** — Experienced centre back. Physical and committed in the air — Panama's secondary set-piece threat.

TACTICAL READ

Panama's game plan is well-defined: set up in a defensive 5-4-1, stay organized, defend set pieces, and look for a breakaway goal. They pulled off a famous 1-0 win against USA in 2023 Gold Cup using exactly this method. The players are honest, hardworking, and disciplined. Against Ghana, Panama have the best chance of a point — both teams need a win and the quality gap is smaller. This is a team to respect but not to back at the outright market. The value for bettors: Panama opponent +goal lines, set piece goals, and the occasional live bet after they go behind and push forward.

MARKET EDGES

LOW Panama to keep it close vs Ghana. The 5-4-1 vs a Ghana squad in transition could produce a 1-0 or 1-1. At +250 or better, a speculative unit makes sense. *Ghana without Partey is a beatable team for a disciplined underdog.*

LOW Panama total goals under 0.5 in the Ghana game — yes, bet Panama to score zero. At -110 that's actually value given the quality gap and their style. *Panama scored in only 4 of their last 8 CONCACAF qualifiers.*

LOW There is no legitimate profitable market for Panama at these prices. The value is entirely in playing against them — fade Panama in every game without hesitation. *Panama's squad quality is 3-4 levels below England and Croatia. No edge here.*

Match Breakdowns — 72 Group-Stage Fixtures

Model win/draw/loss split and the single best value play per fixture.

Group A

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Mexico v Korea Republic	41	25	34	Gimenez anytime scorer
South Africa v Czechia	34	25	41	Schick anytime scorer
Mexico v South Africa	41	25	34	Mexico -1 Asian handicap
Korea Republic v Czechia	39	25	36	Under 2.5 goals
Mexico v Czechia	44	25	31	Mexico to win
South Africa v Korea Republic	37	25	38	Under 2.5 goals

Group B

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Canada v Switzerland	40	25	35	David anytime scorer
Qatar v Bosnia & Herzegovina	31	25	44	Dzeko anytime scorer
Canada v Qatar	42	25	33	Canada over 1.5 goals
Switzerland v Bosnia & Herzegovina	42	25	33	Under 2.5 goals
Canada v Bosnia & Herzegovina	40	25	35	Canada to win
Qatar v Switzerland	36	25	39	Switzerland to win

Group C

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Brazil v Morocco	40	25	35	Brazil/Morocco BTTS
Scotland v Haiti	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals
Brazil v Scotland	44	25	31	Brazil to win and over 2.5
Morocco v Haiti	42	25	33	El Kaabi anytime scorer
Brazil v Haiti	45	25	30	Brazil over 2.5 goals
Morocco v Scotland	41	25	34	Morocco to win

Group D

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
United States v Paraguay	41	25	34	Pulisic anytime scorer
Australia v Türkiye	35	25	40	Çalhanoglu anytime scorer
United States v Australia	41	25	34	USA to win
Paraguay v Türkiye	34	25	41	Türkiye to win
United States v Türkiye	42	25	33	USA to win
Australia v Paraguay	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals

Group E

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Germany v Cote d'Ivoire	42	25	33	Havertz anytime scorer
Ecuador v Curacao	39	25	36	Ecuador to win
Germany v Ecuador	42	25	33	Havertz + Wirtz both to score
Cote d'Ivoire v Curacao	39	25	36	Cote d'Ivoire to win
Germany v Curacao	44	25	31	Germany over 2.5 goals
Cote d'Ivoire v Ecuador	38	25	37	Over 2.5 goals

Group F

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Netherlands v Japan	40	25	35	Gakpo anytime scorer
Tunisia v Sweden	31	25	44	Gyökeres anytime scorer
Netherlands v Tunisia	42	25	33	Netherlands to win
Japan v Sweden	37	25	38	Under 2.5 goals
Netherlands v Sweden	42	25	33	Netherlands to win
Japan v Tunisia	40	25	35	Kubo anytime scorer

Group G

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Belgium v Iran	41	25	34	Lukaku anytime scorer
Egypt v New Zealand	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals
Belgium v Egypt	41	25	34	Lukaku anytime scorer
Iran v New Zealand	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals
Belgium v New Zealand	41	25	34	Belgium to win
Iran v Egypt	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals

Group H

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Spain v Uruguay	45	25	30	Spain/Uruguay BTTS
Saudi Arabia v Cape Verde	37	25	38	Under 2.5 goals
Spain v Saudi Arabia	46	25	29	Oyarzabal anytime scorer
Uruguay v Cape Verde	39	25	36	Uruguay to win
Spain v Cape Verde	46	25	29	Spain over 2.5 goals
Uruguay v Saudi Arabia	39	25	36	Uruguay to win

Group I

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
France v Senegal	43	25	32	Mbappe anytime scorer
Norway v Iraq	44	25	31	Haaland anytime scorer
France v Norway	43	25	32	Mbappe + Haaland both to score
Senegal v Iraq	43	25	32	Senegal to win
France v Iraq	55	25	20	France over 2.5 goals
Norway v Senegal	37	25	38	Haaland anytime scorer

Group J

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Argentina v Austria	43	25	32	Lautaro Martinez anytime scorer
Algeria v Jordan	37	25	38	Under 2.5 goals
Argentina v Algeria	44	25	31	Argentina to win and over 2.5
Austria v Jordan	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals
Argentina v Jordan	44	25	31	Messi to score
Algeria v Austria	37	25	38	Under 2.5 goals

Group K

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
Portugal v Colombia	40	25	35	Ronaldo anytime scorer
Uzbekistan v DR Congo	37	25	38	Under 2.5 goals
Portugal v Uzbekistan	42	25	33	Ronaldo to score
Colombia v DR Congo	47	25	28	Colombia to win
Portugal v DR Congo	52	25	23	Ronaldo anytime scorer
Colombia v Uzbekistan	39	25	36	Colombia to win

Group L

FIXTURE	W	D	L	TOP PLAY
England v Croatia	42	25	33	Kane anytime scorer
Ghana v Panama	38	25	37	Under 2.5 goals
England v Ghana	46	25	29	Kane to score and England win
Croatia v Panama	41	25	34	Kramaric anytime scorer
England v Panama	46	25	29	England over 3.5 goals
Croatia v Ghana	41	25	34	Kramaric anytime scorer