

2026 World Cup Prediction Game Pre Tournament Analysis

June-July 2026

The day is finally here!!! Intense geopolitical strife, economic headwinds and looming uncertainty have done their best to dampen the mood, but they have not succeeded. These issues remain, but today when Mexico gets us underway, we get to tune in and experience magic for the next five weeks. The spectacle of the World Cup is something else!

1 Updates

1. There are 28 of you, wow! That is more than I expected, and I want to thank all of you for taking the time to do this, I am very excited! Obviously, this means that the pool is bigger. So the rewards are as follows: 1/2/3 based on points receive \$100/80/50.
2. The *Paul Award* goes to the player with the lowest misclassification rate and they receive \$20.



Figure 1: Paul the Octopus (RIP)

3. \$10 donation to Miguel Angel Tejero (the Excel sheet is his intellectual property) and \$20 to cover costs associated with the website.
4. Tiebreakers, if/when they are required, will be explained later.

5. You will receive three points for each player that you picked as a prize winner (Ball/Boot) but not where you expected them. E.g. If Mbappe gets Golden and you predicted Silver, you still get points. This is within the context of the prize though, so can't mix and match Boot with Ball.
6. Just for fun, I had Claude and Gemini fill out brackets as well. They both expect France to win, but Gemini predicted a repeat of the 2022 final while Claude had Brazil lose to France 0-2.

2 Data Visualization

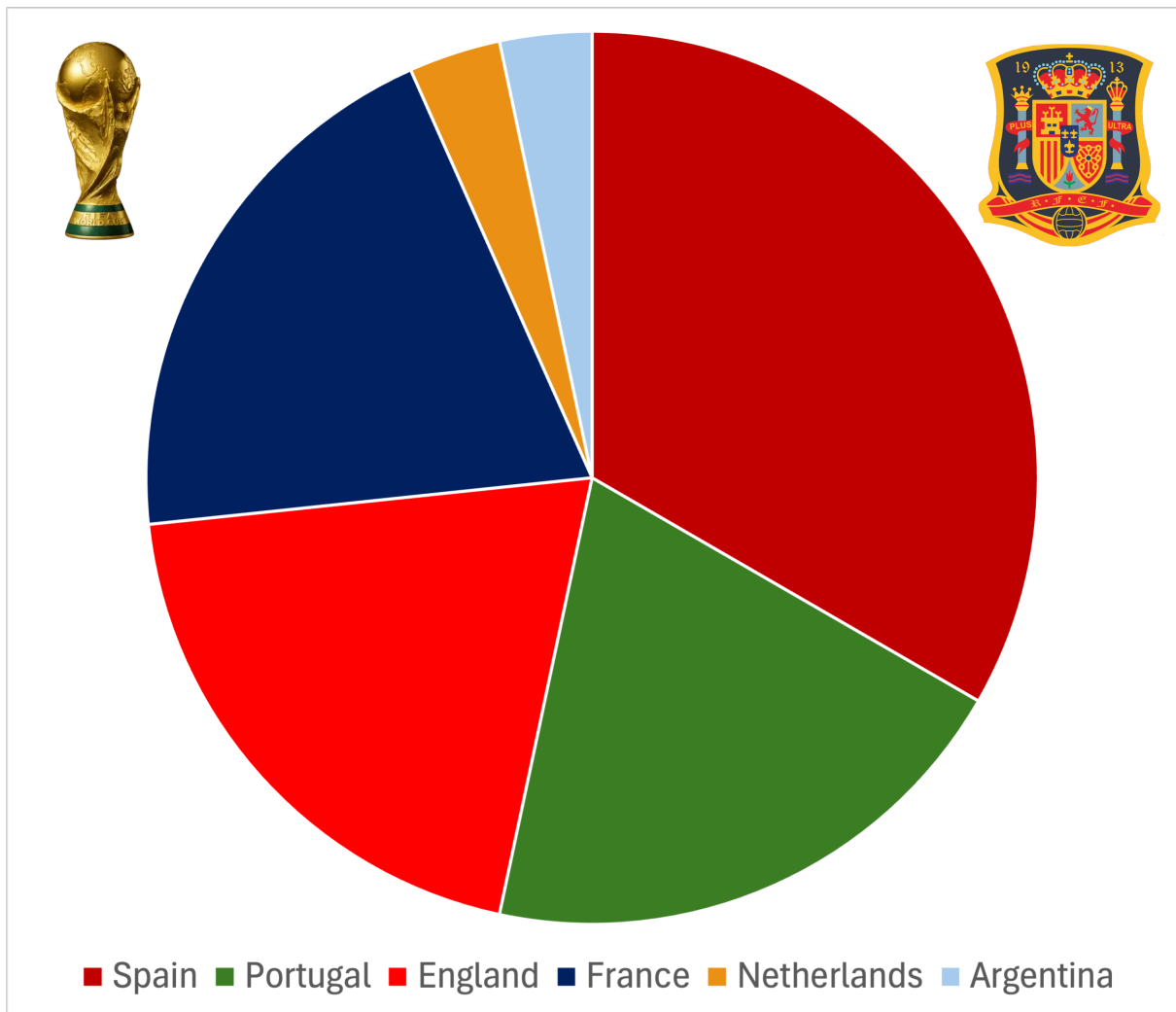


Figure 2: Predicted Champions

These include players that received a prediction from at least two people.

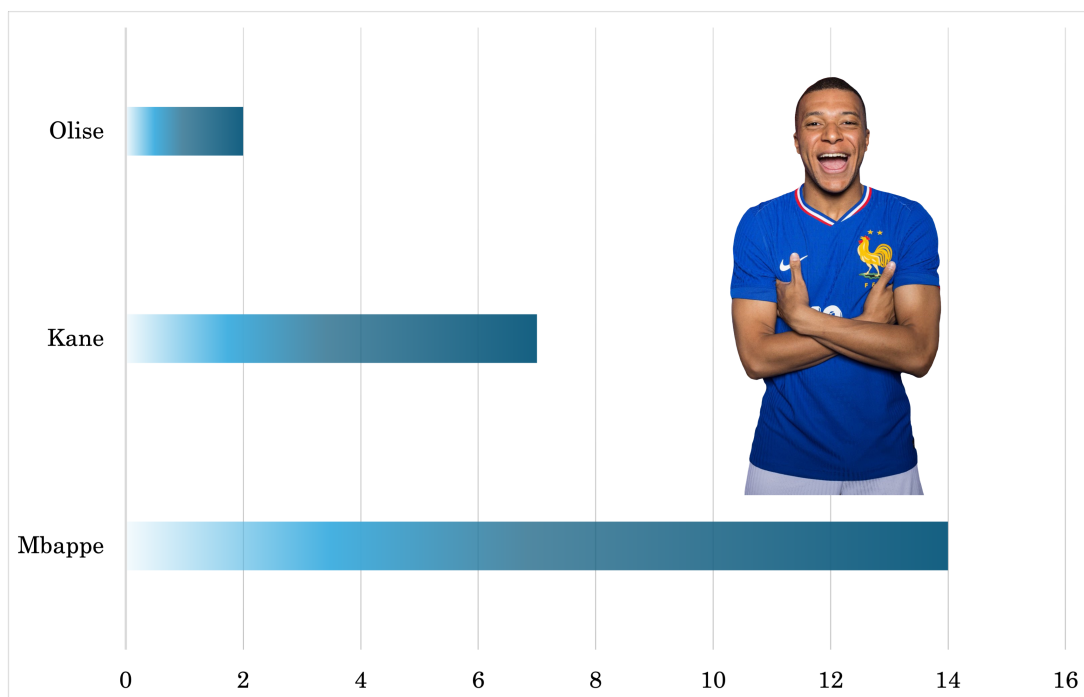


Figure 3: Golden Ball

Olise/Alvarez/Saka/VVD/Pedri/Ronaldo/Messi all received one for Golden Ball.

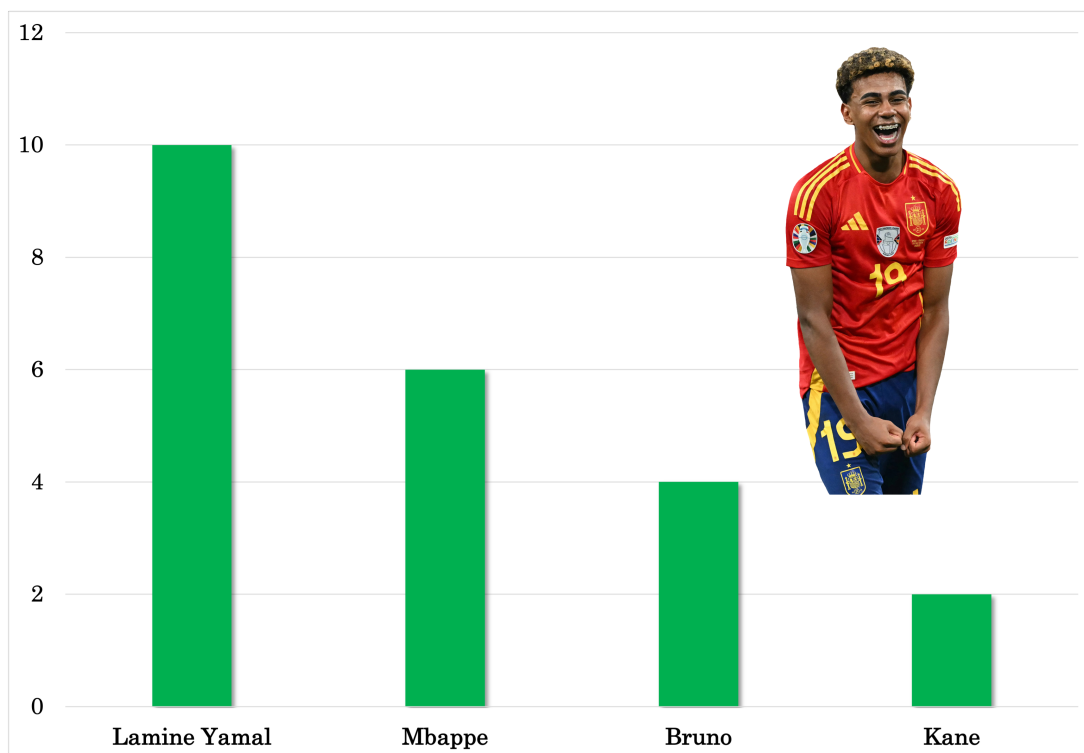


Figure 4: Golden Boot

Haaland/Alvarez/Oyarzabal/Yamal/Ronaldo/Messi all received one for Golden Boot.

3 Players

Five from India.

Eighteen from the US.

Two from the UAE.

One from the UK.

Two from Germany.

Two AI agents.

Five nationalities (India, US, Argentina, Italy, Iran).

Welcome everyone!

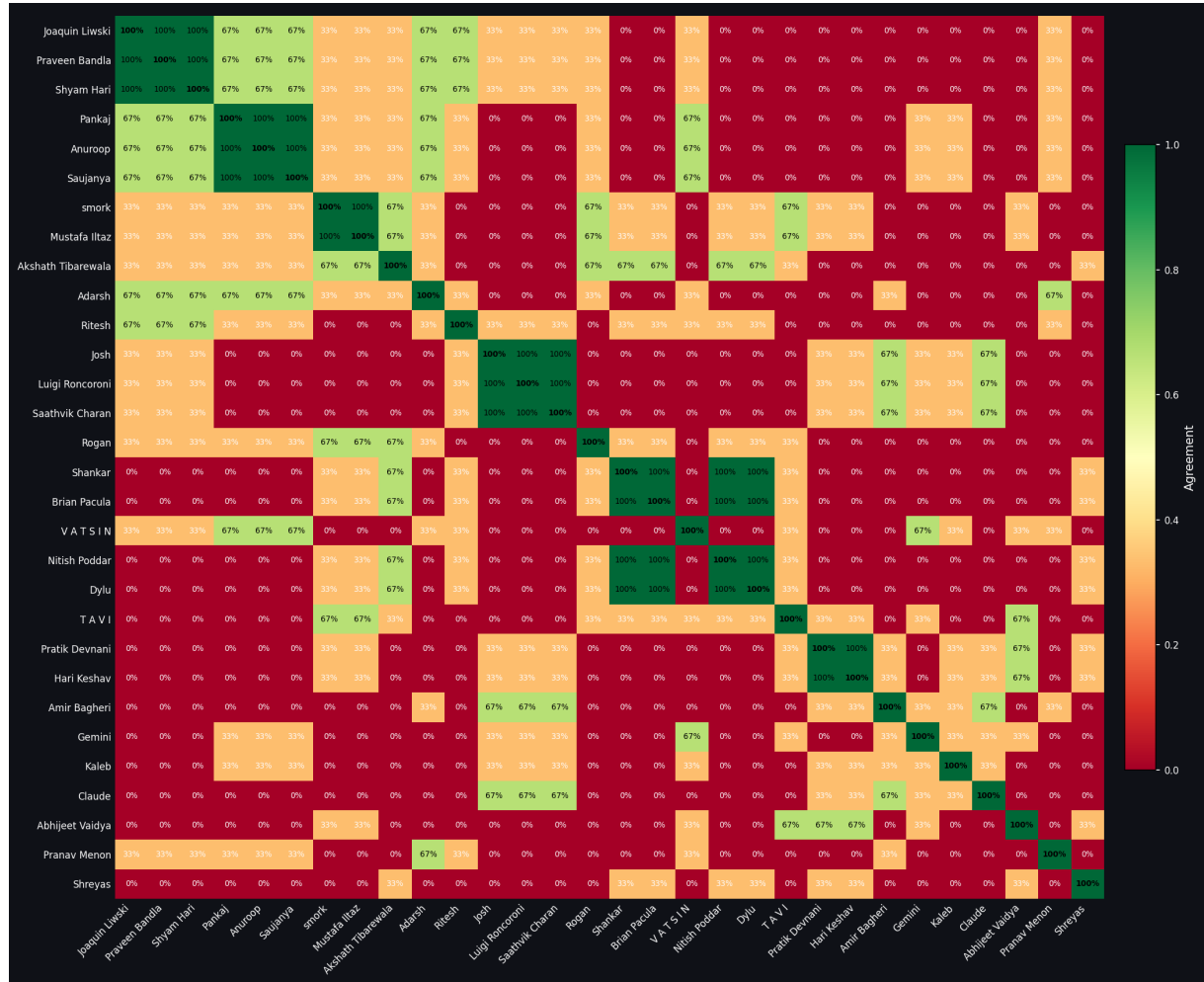


Figure 5: Heatmap

You can use this to see how similar/different your picks are compared to others in the competition.