

2026 World Cup Prediction Round of 32 Analysis

June-July 2026

This is the tournament that keeps giving. Each of these R32 matches were a delight and I am excited to see what is in store. Also, happy 25th birthday to Pranav :)

1 Points Table

Rank	Player	Points	Misclassification Rate	Change
1	Rohan	184	0.4167	↑
2	Brian	181	0.4306	↑
3	Claude	179	0.3472	↑
4	Tavi	177	0.3889	=
5	Pranav	177	0.4306	↑
6	Saathvik	175	0.3472	↓
7	Kaleb	174	0.3194	↓
8	Shyam	173	0.3889	↓
9	Akshath	172	0.4167	↑
10	Joaquín	172	0.4583	↑
11	Gemini	171	0.3611	↓
12	Saujanya	170	0.3611	↓
13	Josh	170	0.3889	↑
14	Smarak	168	0.375	↑
15	Amir	167	0.3611	↓
16	Pratik	167	0.375	↓
17	Abhijeet	166	0.3889	↓
18	Shankar	166	0.4028	↑
19	Praveen	161	0.4167	↑
20	Ritesh	159	0.3889	↓
21	Anuroop	159	0.4583	↑
22	Luigi	158	0.4722	↑
23	Mustafa	157	0.375	↓
24	Dylan	156	0.4306	↓
25	Pankaj	154	0.3472	=
26	Shreyas	154	0.4861	↑
27	Vatsin	151	0.5139	↓
28	Nitish	149	0.4306	=
29	Adarsh	148	0.4557	=
30	Hari	145	0.4583	=

2 Rules Update

- I realized that the MCR is a bit dicey when we move on to the knockout stages since the number of games this is computed on is different for everyone. Thinking through how best to fix this, but for now the MCR is based only on the 64 group stages for which everyone in the league had a prediction.

3 Analytics

Average Points: 165.3

Standard Deviation: 10.5

Median: 167

Range: 39

- The theoretical maximum at this stage is 440 points. Our current leader Rohan has about 42% of that number. Kudos!
- Rohan and Brian correctly predicted 15 out of the 16 teams that went through. Impressive!
- The median is 12, pretty good!
- Joaquín moved from 21st to 9th. He wins this week's Most Improved Award.
- Germany crashed out early to Paraguay in a big upset. Saujanya and Pranav were the only ones who had Germany not progressing, while Pranav is the only one who had Paraguay!
- There is no team that made it through that was not predicted by someone or the other.

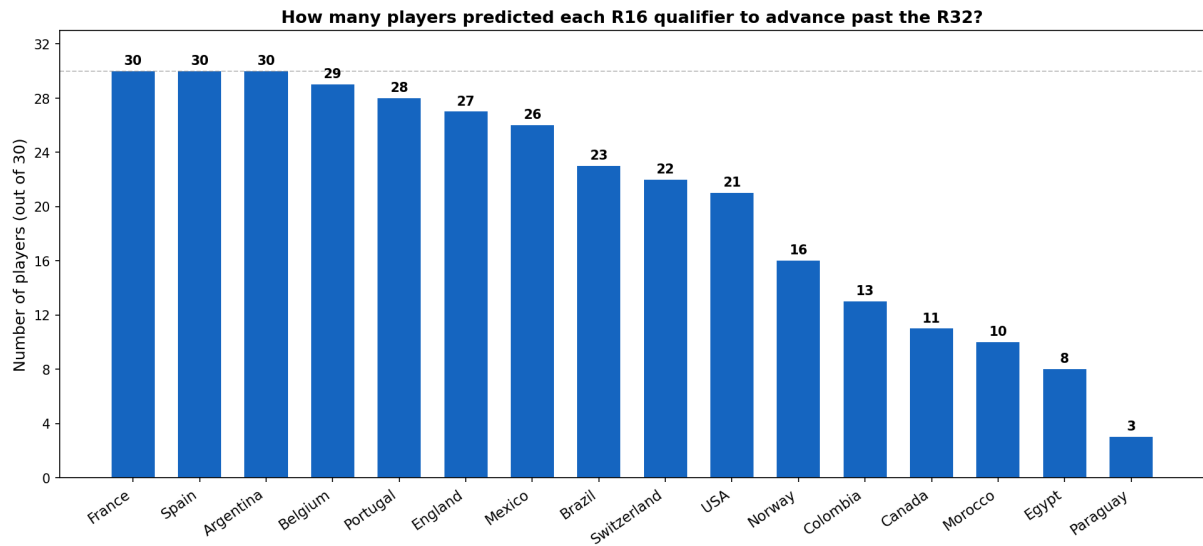


Figure 1: Based on original picks, no reset

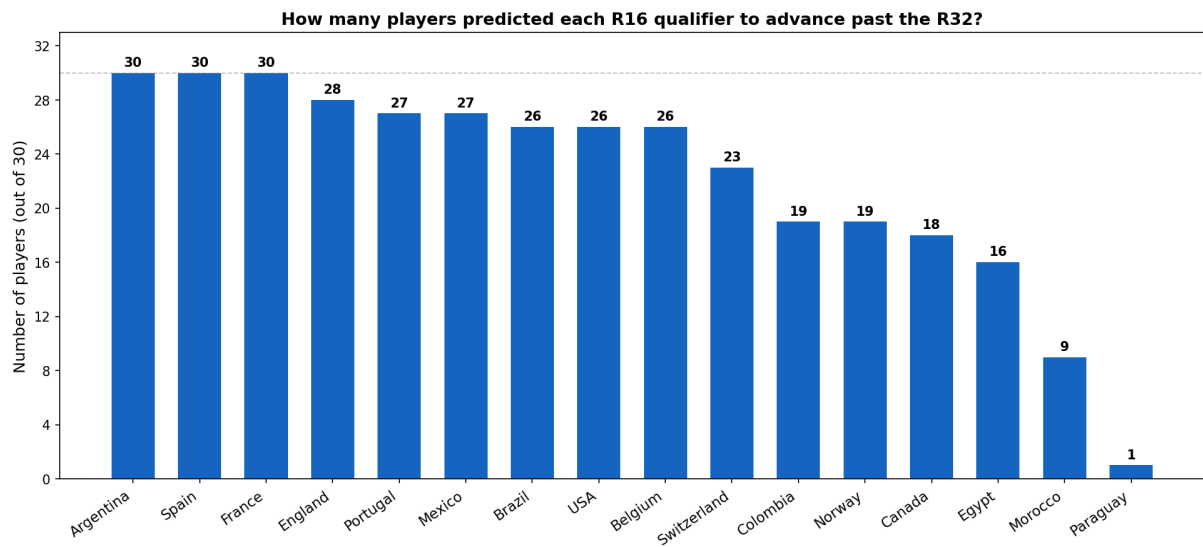


Figure 2: Based on modified picks

4 Was It Worth It? A Counterfactual Analysis of Resetters

If you are a visual learner:

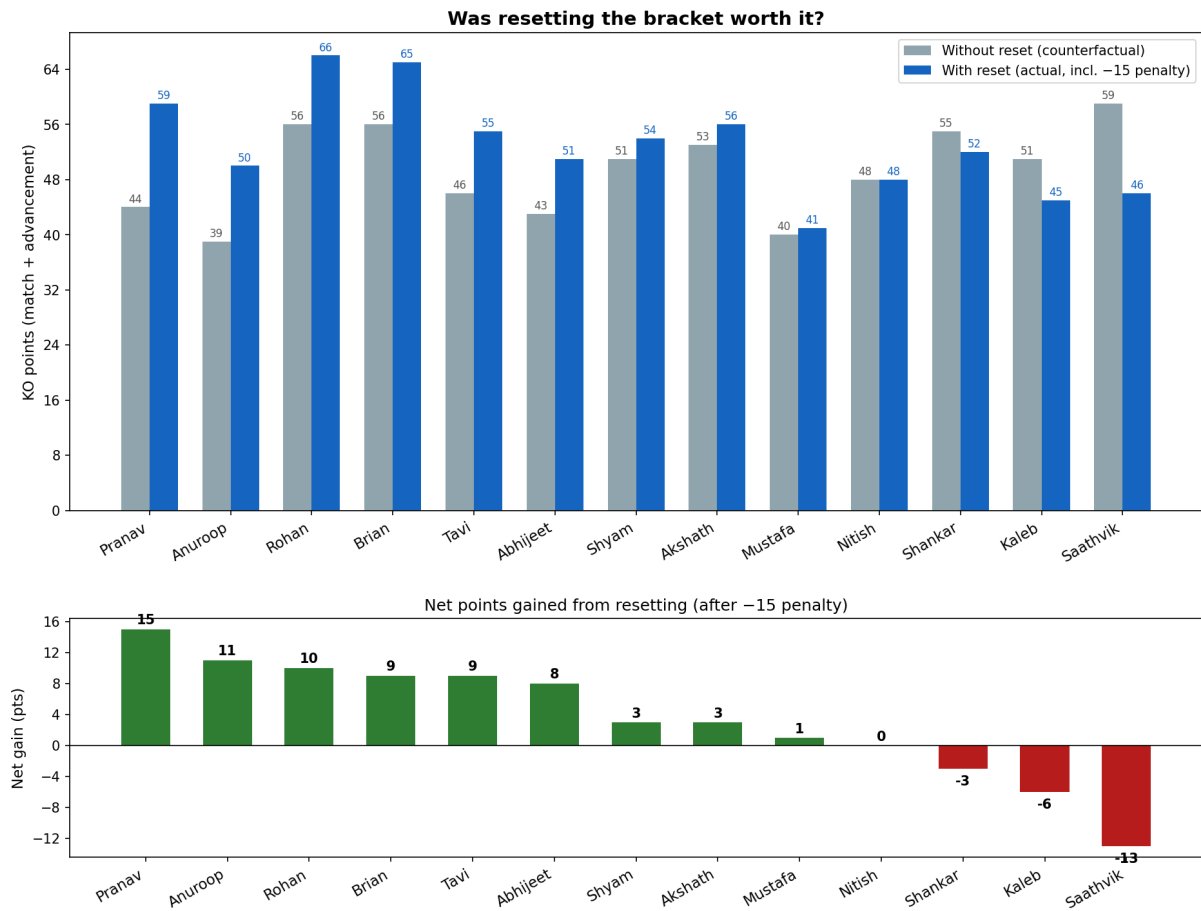


Figure 3: Based on modified picks

If you prefer a table:

Player	Without Reset		With Reset		Net Gain
	Match Pts	Adv. Pts	Match Pts	Adv. Pts	
Pranav	4	40	18	56	↑ +15
Anuroop	3	36	17	48	↑ +11
Rohan	4	52	21	60	↑ +10
Brian	8	48	20	60	↑ +9
Tavi	2	44	14	56	↑ +9
Abhijeet	3	40	14	52	↑ +8
Shyam	3	48	17	52	↑ +3
Akshath	5	48	15	56	↑ +3
Mustafa	4	36	12	44	↑ +1
Nitish	4	44	15	48	= 0
Shankar	7	48	15	52	↓ -3
Kaleb	7	44	16	44	↓ -6
Saathvik	7	52	13	48	↓ -13

4.1 The Optimal Decision Rule

At the end of the Round of 32, each player i may reset their bracket at a fixed cost of 15 points. The optimal reset condition is:

$$\mathbb{E}(\mathbf{x}_{\text{new},i}) - \mathbb{E}(\mathbf{x}_{\text{old},i}) - 15 \geq 0.$$

Using the misclassification rate MR_i as a measure of prediction uncertainty, this becomes:

$$MR_i(48 - x_{\text{old},i}^f) + MR_i(215 - x_{\text{old},i}^t) - 15 \geq 0,$$

where 48 is the maximum remaining fixture points across R16 through the Final (16 matches $\times$ 3 pts), and 215 is the maximum remaining team advancement points (64 from R16, 64 from QF, 40 from SF, 12 for third place, 15 for runner-up, 20 for winner).

Empirical evaluation. Because the fixed cost of 15 is low relative to $MR_i \times 263$ (the expected total remaining points under the rule), the decision rule recommends resetting for essentially all players. This is consistent with the data: 10 of the 13 reseters gained points, with only Shankar (−3), Kaleb (−6), and Saathvik (−13) worse off.

Player	MR_i	Rule LHS	Net Gain
Pranav	0.4306	79.3	↑ +15
Anuroop	0.4583	87.7	↑ +11
Rohan	0.4167	71.3	↑ +10
Brian	0.4306	74.1	↑ +9
Tavi	0.3889	69.4	↑ +9
Abhijeet	0.3889	70.6	↑ +8
Shyam	0.3889	67.4	↑ +3
Akshath	0.4167	72.5	↑ +3
Mustafa	0.3750	68.6	↑ +1
Nitish	0.4306	77.6	= 0
Shankar	0.4028	68.8	↓ -3
Kaleb	0.3194	52.7	↓ -6
Saathvik	0.3472	55.8	↓ -13

Table 1: Rule evaluation for the 13 reseters. Rule LHS > 0 recommends resetting.