Proposal for 12 Groups of Four Format in 48-Team World Cup

By Nicholas W. Stathes

Introduction

The expansion of the FIFA Men's World Cup ("World Cup") from 32 to 48 teams beginning in 2026 will usher in necessary revisions to its format and structure. The era of World Cups hosted by only one nation has ended. More than likely, future tournaments will be hosted by a minimum of three nations. World Cup expansion from 32 to 48 teams presents unique opportunities for FIFA. It also poses substantial challenges with respect to changes in format to a tournament which has worked well from a structural standpoint since World Cup France 1998 saw it expand from 24 to 32 teams.

The following proposal, complete with 2026 and 2030 World Cup match schedule calendars (attached as Exhibits A and B), outlines how FIFA can preserve the excitement of the 32-team, eight groups of four format ("8x4") while expanding the World Cup to 48 nations. The proposal involves a 12-groups-of-four ("12x4") structure with, as was the case in the 8x4, the top two of four group participants qualifying for the knockout stages, and the bottom two teams eliminated. The biggest change from 8x4 to 12x4 is that a 16-team play-in round ("Play-in Round") is introduced prior to the Round of 16. In the 12x4, the winners of the eight game, 16-team Play-in Round will join eight of the best group winners in the Round of 16.

There is a necessary caveat for scheduling purposes in 12x4. It involves dividing World Cup groups into four sections of 12 teams called Quadrants; or, individually, a Quadrant. For example, Groups A, B, C would comprise a Quadrant; D, E, F a Quadrant, etc. From each Quadrant, at the conclusion of the Group Stage, the three group winners are ranked in order based on the same tiebreaking criteria currently in place during the World Cup Group Stage (points, goal differential, goals scored, etc.), and the two highest ranked group winners from a Quadrant advance directly to the Round of 16 (eight teams in total). The third best group winner from each Quadrant (four teams in total) and all group runners-up in a Quadrant (12 teams in total) advance to the Play-in Round, explained in more detail below and depicted in Exhibit C. This 12x4 proposal, including date-specific calendars for the 2026 and 2030 World Cups, shows how 12x4 is not only logistically possible, but optimal for FIFA to adopt.

The 12x4 structure preserves the integrity and excitement of the traditional Group Stage. In addition, the 12x4 structure guarantees that, provided there are no more than four host nations of the World Cup: 1) no host nation could face another host nation until the Semifinals; and 2) each host nation would play at home until the Semifinals at the earliest.

Problems with the Proposed 16 Groups of Three Format

FIFA's proposed 16 groups of three ("16x3") format upends one of the most exciting aspects of the World Cup: simultaneous kickoffs of final group matches. With groups of three, that compelling aspect of the tournament is obviously impossible. In World Cup Qatar 2022,

only two nations had been eliminated prior to their final group match. The final day of group matches and simultaneous kickoffs was in Qatar—and always is—one of the most exciting components of the World Cup. It should never be eliminated.

There are other significant, well-documented problems with the proposed 16x3 format where two of the three group members advance to a Round of 32, including but not limited to the following:

- Danger of teams playing their final group match colluding with the other so both advance (proposals to curtail collusion like a shootout at the conclusion of any group match ending in a draw are equally—if not more—problematic).
- Diminished excitement having one nation kicking off its World Cup campaign while the other nation potentially finishes its own.
- Disparities concerning rest between matches leading to unfair competitive advantages/disadvantages, particularly to the benefit or detriment of teams kicking off the first and last matches in a group. A team playing the first and second group matches and qualifying for the Round of 32 also may have substantially more rest (by as much as five days) than its Round of 32 opponent, which may have played in the final group match only several days prior thereto.
- Risk of host nations' fans losing interest in their respective national teams as they potentially wait nine days between group matches.
- Participating players, coaches and staffs involved in years-long qualifying campaigns only guaranteed two World Cup matches rather than the three under the old format and in the proposed 12x4.
- Fans from around the world making the journey to the host nations with the assurance of only witnessing two matches—possibly nine days apart from one another is unfair. It may cause some fans to stay at home, or for fans of a participating nation to lack interest in their nation's participation in the World Cup.
- Prospect of teams (and fans) waiting around for four or more days for the outcome of the final group match in which their nation is uninvolved, only for such nation to be eliminated following such match.

FIFA's Skepticism of the 16 Groups of Three Format

During World Cup Qatar 2022, various media reports circulated that fortunately, FIFA was not beholden to the 16x3 format. Those same reports mentioned FIFA remained open to a 12 groups of four structure. However, the alternative option to the 16x3 seemed to only include a system where two "simultaneous 24-team tournaments" would take place, keeping a 32-team knockout round as in the 16x3. This would mean half of the third-place teams in the tournament advance to the Round of 32, and two-thirds of the total World Cup participants. In this version of the 12 groups of four structure there would be 104 matches, significantly more than the 80 proposed under the 16x3. It also means watering down the excitement of the final group matchday due to half of third place participants qualifying.

<u>12x4 Format with a Play-in Round Generally</u>

The 12x4 has 96 matches, with the structure of both the 2026 and 2030 World Cups detailed in the calendars attached as Exhibits A and B. The Group Stage of the 12x4 World Cup will operate largely the same as under the 8x4 system, insofar as only the winner and runner-up of each group advance. The 12x4 eliminates the negative aspects previously addressed with the 16x3 format. It also preserves the maximum excitement of the final group matchday as only two teams in a group advance—rather than the potential three teams in a group advancing under the 12 groups of four, 104 match idea.

It is reasonable to have "simultaneous tournaments" when the World Cup has begun an era with three or four host nations. The simultaneous tournaments idea is not unprecedented. In World Cup Korea/Japan 2002, the only time in World Cup history more than one nation has hosted the event, group winners and runners-up were placed on the same side of the Round of 16 bracket. Effectively making it a World Cup with two simultaneous 16-team tournaments taking place. This was done in World Cup Korea/Japan to: 1) prevent South Korea and Japan from playing each other prior to the World Cup Final, and 2) ensure both South Korea and Japan played each game on home soil until at a minimum, the World Cup Final. The consequence of this idea was the risk that two teams from the same group play each other in a Semifinal. In each other 8x4 World Cup since such format began in 1998, the two teams to advance from each group have been placed on opposite sides of the bracket and could therefore only meet again in the World Cup Final.

Similar to the system employed in World Cup Korea/Japan 2002, under a 12x4 format, provided there are no more than four hosts, such hosts could not meet each other until the Semifinal at the earliest. This would also ensure quite easily that a host nation, until the Semifinal at the earliest, would be guaranteed to be playing on its home soil.

To generally reflect, the 12x4 proposal:

- Preserves the excitement of the Group Stage as it operates the same as it did under the 8x4 format with only the group winner and runner-up advancing to the knockout stages;
- Guarantees that, provided there are not more than four host nations, no host nation could, prior to the Semifinals at the earliest: 1) face another host nation, or 2) play away from home; and
- Avoids the incredible flaws associated with 16x3.

Play-in Round Specifics

The attached calendars for 2026 and 2030 show how the 12x4 system could be accomplished. The major change to the World Cup under 12x4 is the Play-in Round prior to the Round of 16 featuring games between the third-ranked group winner of each Quadrant (four teams in total) and all three group runners-up (12 teams in total). The winners of those Play-in Round matches would be paired against the two best group winners within its Quadrant. The highest ranked group winner would be matched up against the Play-in Round winner of the runners-up from the other two groups. For example, if A1 was the highest ranked group winner

of the Quadrant featuring groups A, B and C, it would face the Play-in Round winner of B2 v. C2 in the Round of 16. The second ranked group winner of a Quadrant would play the Play-in Round winner of the third ranked group winner and runner-up of the group containing the highest ranked group winner. For example, if B2 was the second ranked group winner of the Quadrant featuring groups A, B and C, it would face the winner of C1 v. A2 in the Round of 16. The winners of those Round of 16 matches would then play in a Quadrant Quarterfinal. The prospect—albeit slight—of two teams from the same group meeting in the Quarterfinal is a necessary consequence associated with the advantages the 12x4 offers. The above-referenced examples of how a Quadrant would operate, with arbitrary nations included for purposes of clarity, is provided visually and attached as Exhibit C.

Other Considerations and Changes to the Current 8x4 Structure

Other than the Play-in Round, the format of the World Cup, including the draw, remain substantially the same as since the 8x4 began in 1998. If, like in 2026, there are three hosts, the hosts would be automatically be placed in slots A1, D1 and G1 (if there are four teams then the fourth host would be placed into J1). Nine (or eight, if four nations host) seeded teams based on the last FIFA World Ranking prior to the World Cup draw would be drawn to make up the other teams in in position one (1) of a group. No seeded teams from the same Confederation could be drawn into the same Quadrant unless there were more than four seeded teams from a Confederation. For example, if Argentina and Brazil, both members of the South American Football Confederation, were in the top nine of the FIFA World Ranking prior to the 2026 World Cup draw and seeded, those nations could not be placed into the same Quadrant. Therefore, those nations could only meet at the Semifinals at the earliest. The rest of the draw would operate largely as it had under an 8x4, with the remaining group slots being filled based on Confederation considerations. However, measures would be taken to avoid an unnecessary number of teams from the same Confederation being drawn into the same Quadrant. For example, if eight teams qualify from the Asian Confederation ("AFC"), no more than one AFC team could be drawn into the same group (as it has been in 8x4), and no more than two AFC teams could be drawn into the same Quadrant.

Each final group match would kickoff simultaneously to prevent collusion, and each final group match in a Quadrant would take place on the same day. However, groups including host nations would have the benefit of kicking off in the latest timeslot that day. A draw would take place during the World Cup group draw dictating the timeslot the other two groups in a Quadrant not containing the hosts kickoff on the final group matchday. If a Quadrant did not contain a host nation, the timeslot draw would contain all three groups comprising a Quadrant. There is clearly an advantage for a group in a Quadrant to have a later kickoff on the final group matchday. As the best two group winners in a Quadrant advance to the Round of 16 and avoid the Play-in Round, understanding what result is necessary to advance directly to the Round of 16 provides a competitive advantage. In the 12x4, that competitive advantage is given to groups comprising host nations. The competitive advantages/disadvantages to arise from the 16x3 format addressed above.

The attached proposed schedule for the 2026 and 2030 tournament is for illustration purposes. It shows how teams could still have a minimum of three days of rest between matches (except for between the Semifinals and third place match – the same as it was under 8x4). The total tournament would have 96 games compared to 80 under the 16x3 structure. It would take 38 days to complete, but it could be shortened to 37 days if a host nation played in the World Cup Opening match on a day when other matches took place. Under the 12x4 format, the 16 teams participating in the Play-in Round, should they reach the Semifinal, would play a total of eight games rather than a maximum of seven under the 8x4 and 16x3. However, under the 12 groups of four format with a Round of 32, teams qualifying for the Semifinals are guaranteed to play eight matches, rather than under the 12x4 where a team reaching the Semifinal may only play seven.

Attached 2026 and 2030 Match Calendars

The calendars for the 2026 and 2030 World Cups attached as Exhibits A and B show how the World Cup could work generally, and include an illustration containing where specific hosts might be placed. Please note, showing the 2030 hosts as Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Paraguay is not meant to be an endorsement of the bid. It is simply to illustrate how and when a World Cup hosted by four nations would and could operate.

In the 2026 calendar including USA, Mexico and Canada as hosts, the coloring is designed to reflect the games in which a particular World Cup host <u>must</u> host to ensure such host plays in front of its home fans until the Semifinal at the earliest. For example, each host must host each of its three group matches. The nation must also host the two Play-in Round matches, two Round of 16 matches, and a Quadrant Quarterfinal, as such host nation could be involved in those matches. Under the 12 groups of 4 format with two simultaneous 24 team tournaments, a host may finish as one of the best Third Place teams and wind-up playing far from home. The USA is listed in the attached 2026 World Cup Calendar as A1, but it could potentially be moved to G1 and have the prospect of playing a Quarterfinal on the Fourth of July, which will mark its Semiquincentennial Anniversary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the 12x4 proposal preserves what we love about the current system, format and excitement of the World Cup, while expanding to 48 participating nations. It also facilitates a new World Cup era where, more than likely, no fewer than three nations will host, and guarantees that all World Cup hosts will play the vast majority of their World Cup matches on home soil.

I invite you to reach out to me directly at <u>nstathes@tszlegal.com</u> with any questions, comments, or ideas about the 12x4 proposal.

	FIFA World Cur	2026 - Propose	<u>Exhibit A</u> d Match Schedu	le: 5 June 2026	to 12 July 2026	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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						0.00-04
					1 41 - 40	2: A3 V. A4
					1. AI V. A2	3. B1 V. B2 4. B3 v. B4
						T. D3 V. D4
7	7 8	9) 10) 11	12	13
5. 61 - 60	0. 51 - 50	12:01-02	17.11 - 10	01. 1/1 1/0	05. 41 - 42	20: 61 -: 62
5: C1 V. C2	9: E1 V. E2	13: G1 V. G2	17:11 V. 12	21: KI V. K2	25: A1 v. A3	29: C1 v. C3
7: D1 v D2	10: E3 V. E4	14: G3 V. G4	18: 15 V. 14 19: 11 v. 12	22: K5 V. K4	20: A2 V. A4 27: B1 v. B3	31: D1 v D3
8: D3 v. D4	12: F3 v. F4	16: H3 v. H4	20: J3 v. J4	24: L3 v. L4	28: B2 v. B4	32: D2 v. D4
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22. 51 - 52	27: C1 # C2	41, 11 - 12	45. V1 v. V2	49: B1 V. B2	55: E1 V. E4	61: H1 V. H4
33. E1 V. E3	38: G2 v. G4	41.11 V.13	45. K1 V. K5	51: C1 v. C2	57: E1 v. E4	63: 11 v. 14
35: F1 v F3	39: H1 v H3	43: J1 v J3	47: L1 v L3	52: C3 v C4	58: F2 v F3	64: 12 y 13
36: F2 v. F4	40: H2 v. H4	44: J2 v. J4	48: L2 v. L4	53: A1 v. A4	59; D1 v. D4	65: G1 v. G4
				54: A2v. A3	60: D2 v. D3	66: G2 v. G3
21	. 22	23	24	25	26	27
67: K1 v. K4						
68: K2 v. K3						
69: L1 v. L4	73: 1st A/B/C v. 2nd A/B/C	75: 1st D/E/F v. 2nd D/E/F	77: 1st G/H/I v. 2nd G/H/I	79: 1st J/K/L v. 2nd J/K/L	Rest Day	81: 1st A/B/C v. Winner 73
70: L2 v. L3	74: 2nd A/B v. 2nd B/C	76: 2nd D/E v. 2nd E/F	78: 2nd G/H v. 2nd H/I	80: 2nd J/K v. 2nd K/L		82: 1st A/B/C v. Winner 74
71: J1 v. J4						
72: J2 V. J3	29	30	1	2	3	. 4
83: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 75	85: 1st G/H/I v. Winner 77	87: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 77	Rest Day	Rest Day	89: Winner 81 v. Winner 82	91: Winner 85 v. Winner 86
84: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 76	86: 1st G/H/J v. Winner 78	88: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 78			90: Winner 83 v. Winner 84	92: Winner 87 v. Winner 88
5	6	7	8	9	10) 11
Rest Day	Rest Day	93: Winner 89 v. Winner 90	94: Winner 91 v. Winner 92	Rest Day	Rest Day	95: Loser 93 v. Loser 94
12	•					
12	*					
96: Winner 93 v. Winner 94						
	FIFA World Cur	2030 - Propose	d Match Schedu	le: 7 June 2030	to 14 July 2030	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday	monuny	Lucisuuy	"Cuncounty	Indistay		Sacurary

					7	8
						2: A3 v. A4
					1. A1 v. A2	3. B1 v. B2
						4: B3 v. B4
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
5: C1 v. C2	9: E1 v. E2	13: G1 v. G2	17: I1 v. I2	21: K1 v. K2	25: A1 v. A3	29: C1 v. C3
6: C3 v. C4	10: E3 v. E4	14: G3 v. G4	18: I3 v. I4	22: K3 v. K4	26: A2 v. A4	30: C2 v. C4
7: D1 v. D2	11: F1 v. F2	15: H1 v. H2	19: J1 v. J2	23: L1 v. L2	27: B1 v. B3	31: D1 v. D3
8: D3 v. D4	12: F3 v. F4	16: H3 v. H4	20: J3 v. J4	24: L3 v. L4	28: B2 v. B4	32: D2 v. D4
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
22 P1 P2	25 61 62		15 1/1 1/2	49: B1 v. B2	55: E1 V. E4	61: H1 v. H4
33: E1 V. E3	37: GI v. G3	41:11 v. 13	45: KI V. K3	50: B3 v. B4	56: E2 v. E3	62: H2 v. H3
34: E2 V. E4	38: G2 V. G4	42: 12 V. 14	46: K2 V. K4	51: C1 v. C2	57: F1 V. F4	63: 11 v. 14
35: F1 V. F3	39: HI V. H3	43: J1 V. J3	47: L1 V. L3	52: C3 V. C4	58: F2 V. F3	64: 12 V. 13
36: F2 V. F4	40: H2 V. H4	44: 52 V. 54	48: L2 V. L4	53: AI V. A4	59: D1 V. D4	65: G1 V. G4
23	24	25	26	34. A2 V. A3	28	29
67: K1 v K4	24	20	20	21	20	23
68: K2 v. K3						
69: L1 v. L4	73: 1st A/B/C v. 2nd A/B/C	75: 1st D/E/F v. 2nd D/E/F	77: 1st G/H/I v. 2nd G/H/I	79: 1st J/K/L v. 2nd J/K/L	Rest Day	81: 1st A/B/C v. Winner 73
70: L2 v. L3	74: 2nd A/B v. 2nd B/C	76: 2nd D/E v. 2nd E/F	78: 2nd G/H v. 2nd H/I	80: 2nd J/K v. 2nd K/L		82: 1st A/B/C v. Winner 74
71: J1 v. J4						
72: J2 v. J3						
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
83: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 75	85: 1st G/H/I v. Winner 77	87: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 77	Rest Day	Rest Day	89: Winner 81 v. Winner 82	91: Winner 85 v. Winner 86
84: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 76	86: 1st G/H/J v. Winner 78	88: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 78			90: Winner 83 v. Winner 84	92: Winner 87 v. Winner 88
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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Rest Day	Rest Day	93: Winner 89 v. Winner 90	94: Winner 91 v. Winner 92	Rest Day	Rest Day	95: Loser 93 v. Loser 94
14						
96: Winner 93 v. Winner 94						
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			<u>Exhibit B</u>			
	FIFA World Cup	2026 - Propose	d Match Schedu	le: 5 June 2026	to 12 July 2026	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					.	0
						2: A3 v. A4
					1. USA v. A2	3. B1 v. B2
						4. 55 V. 54
7	7 8	9	10	11	12	13
5: C1 v. C2	9: E1 v. E2	13: Canada v. G2	17: 11 v. 12 18: 13 v. 14	21: K1 v. K2	25: USA v. A3	29: C1 v. C3
7: Mexico v. D2	11: F1 v. F2	15: H1 v. H2	19: J1 v. J2	23: L1 v. L2	27: B1 v. B3	31: Mexico v. D3
8: D3 v. D4	12: F3 v. F4	16: H3 v. H4	20: J3 v. J4	24: L3 v. L4	28: B2 v. B4	32: D2 v. D4
14	l 15	16	17	18	19	20
				49: B1 v. B2	55: E1 v. E4	61: H1 v. H4
33: E1 v. E3	37: Canada v. G3	41: I1 v. I3	45: K1 v. K3	50: B3 v. B4	56: E2 v. E3	62: H2 v. H3
34: E2 v. E4	38: G2 v. G4	42: 12 v. 14	46: K2 v. K4	51: C1 v. C2	57: F1 v. F4	63: I1 v. I4
35: F1 v. F3	39: H1 v. H3	43: J1 v. J3	47: L1 v. L3	52: C3 v. C4	58: F2 v. F3	64: 12 v. 13
30: F2 V. F4	40. 112 V. 114	44: 52 v. 54	40. L2 V. L4	54: A2 v. A3	60: D2 v. D3	66: G2 v. G3
21	L 22	23	24	25	26	27
67: K1 v. K4						
68: K2 v. K3		75 1 (D (D (D) 0 1 D (D (D		70.1.1.1.1.1.0.1.1.1.1.1.1	D (D	
69: L1 V. L4 70: L2 v. L3	73: 1st A/B/C v. 2nd A/B/C 74: 2nd A/B v. 2nd B/C	75: 1st D/E/F v. 2nd D/E/F	77: 1st G/H/I v. 2nd G/H/I 78: 2nd G/H v. 2nd H/I	79: 1st J/K/L v. 2nd J/K/L 80: 2nd L/K v. 2nd K/L	Kest Day	81: 1st $A/B/C v$. Winner 73
70: E2 V. E5	74. 2nd A/D V. 2nd D/C	70. 2nd D/E V. 2nd E/F	70. 200 0/11 0. 200 0/1	00. 2nd 07 K V. 2nd K/L		62. ISCA/D/C V. WIIIIEI /4
72: J2 v. J3						
28	3 29	30	1	2	3	4
83: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 75	85: 1st G/H/I v. Winner 77	87: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 77	Rest Day	Rest Day	89: Winner 81 v. Winner 82	91: Winner 85 v. Winner 86
84: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 76	86: Ist G/H/J v. Winner 78	88: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 78			90: Winner 83 v. Winner 84	92: Winner 87 v. Winner 88
0	0	1	8	9	10	11
	D (D				D (D	
Kest Day	Rest Day	93: winner 89 v. winner 90	94: winner 91 v. winner 92	Rest Day	Rest Day	95: Loser 95 V. Loser 94
12	2					
96: Winner 93 v. Winner 94						
	FIFA World Cup	2030 - Propose	d Match Schedu	le: 7 June 2030	to 14 July 2030	
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					7	8
						2: A3 v. A4
					1. Uruguay v. A2	3. B1 v. B2
						4: B3 v. B4
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
5.01 - 02	0. F1 - F2	12. American and CO	17.11 - 10	01. 171 - 170	05. Umren 10	00.01 - 00
5: C1 V. C2 6: C3 v. C4	9: E1 V. E2 10: E3 v. E4	15: Argentina v. G2 14: G3 v. G4	17:11 V. 12 18:13 v. 14	21: K1 V. K2 22: K3 v V4	25: Oruguay v. A3 26: A2 v. A4	29: C1 V. C3 30: C2 v. C4
7: Chile v. D2	11: F1 v. F2	15: H1 v. H2	19: Paraguay v. J2	23: L1 v. L2	27: B1 v. B3	31: Chile v. D3
8: D3 v. D4	12: F3 v. F4	16: H3 v. H4	20: J3 v. J4	24: L3 v. L4	28: B2 v. B4	32: D2 v. D4
10	17	18	19	49: B1 v. B2	55: E1 v. E4	61: H1 v. H4
33: E1 v. E3	37: Argentina v. G3	41: I1 v. I3	45: K1 v. K3	50: B3 v. B4	56: E2 v. E3	62: H2 v. H3
34: E2 v. E4	38: G2 v. G4	42: I2 v. I4	46: K2 v. K4	51: C1 v. C2	57: F1 v. F4	63: I1 v. I4
35: F1 v. F3	39: H1 v. H3	43: Paraguay v. J3	47: L1 v. L3	52: C3 v. C4	58: F2 v. F3	64: I2 v. I3
36: F2 v. F4	40: H2 v. H4	44: J2 v. J4	48: L2 v. L4	53: Uruguay v. A4	59: Chile v. D4	65: Argentina v. G4
23	3 24	25	26	27	28	29
67: K1 v. K4						
68: K2 v. K3						
09: L1 v. L4 70: L2 v. L3	73: 1st A/B/C v. 2nd A/B/C 74: 2nd A/B v. 2nd B/C	76: 1st D/E/F v. 2nd D/E/F 76: 2nd D/E v. 2nd E/F	77: 1st G/H/1 v. 2nd G/H/I 78: 2nd G/H v. 2nd H/I	79: 1st J/K/L v. 2nd J/K/L 80: 2nd J/K v. 2nd K/L	Rest Day	o1: 1st A/B/C v. Winner 73 82: 1st A/B/C v. Winner 74
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71: Paraguay v. J4 72: J2 v. J3 30 1 2 3 5 6
 83: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 75
 85: 1st G/H/I v. Winner 77
 87: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 77

 84: 1st D/E/F v. Winner 76
 86: 1st G/H/J v. Winner 78
 88: 1st J/K/L v. Winner 78

 89: Winner 81 v. Winner 82
 91: Winner 85 v. Winner 86

 90: Winner 83 v. Winner 84
 92: Winner 87 v. Winner 88
Rest Day Rest Day 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 93: Winner 89 v. Winner 90 94: Winner 91 v. Winner 92 Rest Day Rest Day Rest Day Rest Day 95: Loser 93 v. Loser 94 14 96: Winner 93 v. Winner 94

<u>Exhibit C</u> FIFA World Cup 2026 - Example of Quadrant 1

Group A Final Standings						Group B Final Standings															
Pos	Team		Pld	w	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Pos	Team	Pld	w	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	
1	USA		3	2	1	0	9	2	7	7	1	Brazil	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6	
2	Mali		3	1	2	0	2	1	1	5	2	Norway	3	2	0	1	3	4	-1	6	
3	New Zealand		3	1	0	2	4	7	-3	3	3	Egypt	3	3	1	1	1	1	0	4	
4	Scotland		3	0	1	2	1	6	-5	1	4	Saudi Arabia	3	0	1	2	1	3	-2	1	

	Group C Final Standings												
Pos	Team	Pld	w	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts				
1	Netherlands	3	2	0	1	5	2	3	6				
2	Japan	3	1	1	1	2	2	0	4				
3	Peru	3	1	1	1	2	3	-1	4				
4	Poland	3	1	0	2	3	5	-2	3				

Ranking of Quadrant 1	I Group Winners
-	-

Pos	Team	Pld	w	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts
1	USA	3	2	1	0	9	2	7	7
2	Brazil	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6
3	Netherlands	3	2	0	1	5	2	3	6

