

NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 5 PREDICTIONS 2026

NOVEMBER 13-15, 2026

Six match previews, tactical keys and the race for the final

Kickoffs in ET, PT, GMT and CET



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Select a matchup for its preview, or the smaller page number for tactical keys.



WEEKEND REVIEW

ROUND 4 RESULTS

November 6-8, 2026 | Final scores

DATE	MATCHUP	FINAL	TRIES
06 NOV	Ireland vs Argentina	**42-12**	6-2
07 NOV	Italy vs South Africa	**7-66**	1-9
07 NOV	Scotland vs New Zealand	**21-43**	3-7
07 NOV	Wales vs Japan	**28-21**	4-3
07 NOV	France vs Fiji	**54-17**	8-2
08 NOV	England vs Australia	**45-22**	7-3

4-2
ROUND WINS FOR NORTH

378
POINTS ACROSS SIX TESTS

+59
BIGGEST MARGIN: SOUTH AFRICA

WHAT CHANGED

France and England both reached 170 points scored across four matches. France lead the North by two table points over England and Ireland. The North won four of six in Round 4, outscoring the South 197-181 despite the 59-point loss in Turin.

South Africa and New Zealand both secured their fourth bonus-point win. Their results kept them level on 20 table points, with South Africa ahead on points difference. The final places will be set after Round 6.

AFTER FOUR ROUNDS

POOL STANDINGS

Competition points and scoring record | November 9 snapshot

NORTH POOL

RK	TEAM	W	L	PF	PA	PD	TB	LB	PTS
1	**France**	3	1	170	92	+78	4	1	**17**
2	England	3	1	170	99	+71	3	0	**15**
3	Ireland	3	1	132	103	+29	3	0	**15**
4	Scotland	2	2	129	140	-11	3	0	**11**
5	Wales	2	2	88	123	-35	2	0	**10**
6	Italy	0	4	44	197	-153	0	0	**0**

SOUTH POOL

RK	TEAM	W	L	PF	PA	PD	TB	LB	PTS
1	**South Africa**	4	0	196	56	+140	4	0	**20**
2	New Zealand	4	0	164	91	+73	4	0	**20**
3	Australia	1	3	136	130	+6	3	1	**8**
4	Argentina	1	3	109	141	-32	2	1	**7**
5	Japan	1	3	83	116	-33	0	1	**5**
6	Fiji	0	4	66	199	-133	0	0	**0**

PF/PA: points for and against. PD: points difference. TB/LB: try and losing bonus points. No draws through Round 4. Japan and Fiji are in the South pool for this competition.

A win earns four table points and a draw two. One bonus point is available for four or more tries; a loss by seven points or fewer also earns one. For tied teams in the same pool, wins and then points difference are the first two tiebreakers.



NOVEMBER 13-15

KICKOFF PLANNER

All six fixtures | Home team listed first

DATE	MATCHUP / VENUE	ET	PT	GMT	CET
FRI 13	**France vs South Africa** Stade de France | Paris	15:10	12:10	20:10	21:10
SAT 14	**Italy vs Argentina** Stadio Luigi Ferraris | Genoa	06:40	03:40	11:40	12:40
SAT 14	**Wales vs New Zealand** Principality Stadium | Cardiff	09:10	06:10	14:10	15:10
SAT 14	**England vs Japan** Allianz Stadium | London	11:40	08:40	16:40	17:40
SAT 14	**Ireland vs Fiji** Aviva Stadium | Dublin	15:10	12:10	20:10	21:10
SUN 15	**Scotland vs Australia** Scottish Gas Murrayfield | Edinburgh	10:10	07:10	15:10	16:10

WEEKEND AT A GLANCE

Friday opens with France and South Africa in Paris. Saturday runs from Italy-Argentina in Genoa to Ireland-Fiji in Dublin, with four fixtures in sequence. Scotland-Australia has the Sunday slot at Murrayfield.

ET and PT are U.S. Eastern and Pacific time. GMT is the local time in the U.K. and Ireland; CET applies in France and Italy. Times use the 24-hour clock.



ROUND 5 | MATCH 01 | THE POOL LEADERS MEET

FRANCE VS SOUTH AFRICA

FRI 13 NOV | PARIS

Stade de France

U.S. EASTERN / ET	U.S. PACIFIC / PT	U.K. & IRELAND / GMT	CENTRAL EUROPE / CET
15:10	12:10	20:10	21:10

FRANCE | 3-1 | 17 PTS

42.5 scored / 23.0 allowed per game

Round 4: W 54-17 vs Fiji

SOUTH AFRICA | 4-0 | 20 PTS

49.0 scored / 14.0 allowed per game

Round 4: W 66-7 vs Italy

MATCH PREVIEW

France and South Africa both arrive after wide wins, but their opponents set different tests. France scored eight tries against Fiji, while the Springboks scored nine in Turin and conceded just five penalties. South Africa have allowed 14.0 points per game through four rounds, the lowest figure in either pool. France have a credible answer at home: they scored 32 in a two-point loss to unbeaten New Zealand in July. The lean is South Africa by one score. Two early French tries could erase that edge.

EDITORIAL PICK	PROJECTED | HOME-AWAY	CONFIDENCE
South Africa	**27-31**	Low

Official match centre

Tactical keys >

MATCH 01 | TACTICAL PREVIEW

MATCH KEYS

France vs South Africa

ROUND 4 INDICATORS

Numbers come from each team's previous fixture.

METRIC	FRANCE *vs Fiji*	SOUTH AFRICA *vs Italy*
Tries	8	9
Lineouts won / total	13 / 15	14 / 15
Penalties conceded	6	5
Clean breaks	15	12

01

HOW FRANCE CAN WIN

Keep the ball available after the first carry. A pass back against the grain, followed by quick width, can make South Africa reset their defensive line before it is ready. A clean exit after scoring matters as much as the score: don't let the restart hand the Springboks a short field.

02

HOW SOUTH AFRICA CAN WIN

Make France play out from deep. High kicks with a connected chase can force rushed returns, and a secure attacking lineout gives South Africa a choice between the maul and a strike off the top. The aim is to make France defend two or three phases after every field-position loss.

03

WHAT TO WATCH EARLY

Track the first three French lineouts in South African territory. Clean ball and fast exits from the maul give France enough options to take the favorite out of its preferred script. If those possessions end in turnovers or slow ball, the Springboks can manage territory without chasing tries.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE PICK

France have a path to the upset if they win their early lineouts and finish their first two visits inside the 22.

< Match preview

Contents



ROUND 5 | MATCH 02 | A CHANCE TO RESET IN GENOA

ITALY VS ARGENTINA

SAT 14 NOV | GENOA

Stadio Luigi Ferraris

U.S. EASTERN / ET	U.S. PACIFIC / PT	U.K. & IRELAND / GMT	CENTRAL EUROPE / CET
06:40	03:40	11:40	12:40

ITALY | 0-4 | 0 PTS

11.0 scored / 49.2 allowed per game

Round 4: L 7-66 vs South Africa

ARGENTINA | 1-3 | 7 PTS

27.2 scored / 35.2 allowed per game

Round 4: L 12-42 vs Ireland

MATCH PREVIEW

Italy conceded 66 to South Africa; Argentina shipped 42 in Dublin. Argentina's 35-21 win over Wales and seven-point loss to England show a higher ceiling than their 1-3 record alone suggests. The warning is last week's lineout: Argentina won seven of 12, while Italy won eight of nine against a different opponent. Italy can turn that into a foothold if they find touch and make Argentina start inside their own half. Argentina are the pick for their greater scoring output, with the margin sensitive to the quality of their first set pieces.

EDITORIAL PICK		CONFIDENCE
Argentina	**20-33**	Moderate
	PROJECTED | HOME-AWAY	

Official match centre

Tactical keys >

MATCH 02 | TACTICAL PREVIEW

MATCH KEYS

Italy vs Argentina

ROUND 4 INDICATORS

Numbers come from each team's previous fixture.

METRIC	ITALY *vs South Africa*	ARGENTINA *vs Ireland*
Tries	1	2
Lineouts won / total	8 / 9	7 / 12
Penalties conceded	10	14
Clean breaks	2	8

01

HOW ITALY CAN WIN

Make Argentina start from set pieces deep in their own half. Italy can use touch and a patient chase to build field position, then ask their own lineout to produce one good strike or maul instead of forcing offloads. Keep the restart simple after any points.

02

HOW ARGENTINA CAN WIN

Stabilize the throw early with a shorter target, then use the next carry to fix defenders and move the point of attack. Against Ireland, Argentina conceded 14 penalties. Less time defending from penalty entries would give their backs more chances to work in space.

03

WHAT TO WATCH EARLY

Compare the first two kicks into touch with the next possession. If Italy are throwing in on Argentina's side of halfway and staying in that half after the exit, Genoa has a close match. If Argentina turn those kicks into uncontested exits, Italy will need longer, riskier attacks.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE PICK

Italy can trim the projected margin if their lineout converts territorial pressure into points before halftime.

< Match preview



ROUND 5 | MATCH 03 | CARDIFF TESTS AN UNBEATEN SIDE

WALES VS NEW ZEALAND

SAT 14 NOV | CARDIFF

Principality Stadium

U.S. EASTERN / ET	U.S. PACIFIC / PT	U.K. & IRELAND / GMT	CENTRAL EUROPE / CET
09:10	06:10	14:10	15:10

WALES | 2-2 | 10 PTS

22.0 scored / 30.8 allowed per game

Round 4: W 28-21 vs Japan

NEW ZEALAND | 4-0 | 20 PTS

41.0 scored / 22.8 allowed per game

Round 4: W 43-21 vs Scotland

MATCH PREVIEW

Wales edged Japan 28-21 with four tries and only five penalties conceded. New Zealand scored seven tries against Scotland and won all 17 of their lineouts, a platform for a 43-21 road win. Wales can give themselves a chance by repeating that discipline and making New Zealand start farther from the Welsh 22. Their lineout was less secure against Japan, so long spells of defending could follow if exits fail. New Zealand's 41.0 points per game support a clear lean, with Cardiff's crowd and Wales' first-quarter execution the reasons to keep confidence moderate.

EDITORIAL PICK	PROJECTED | HOME-AWAY	CONFIDENCE
New Zealand	21-38	Moderate

Official match centre

Tactical keys >

MATCH 03 | TACTICAL PREVIEW

MATCH KEYS

Wales vs New Zealand

ROUND 4 INDICATORS

Numbers come from each team's previous fixture.

METRIC	WALES *vs Japan*	NEW ZEALAND *vs Scotland*
Tries	4	7
Lineouts won / total	11 / 16	17 / 17
Penalties conceded	5	8
Clean breaks	16	16

01

HOW WALES CAN WIN

Make every exit a two-part play: a kick with enough height or length, then a connected chase that closes the first passing lane. When Wales earn an attacking lineout, secure the throw before widening the attack. Repeated visits can keep New Zealand from dictating the pace.

02

HOW NEW ZEALAND CAN WIN

Use the first phase after a lineout to make the Welsh midfield commit. Once the tackle and ruck draw defenders in, shift the attack to the edge with supporting runners available for the next carry. A loose return kick offers the same chance without waiting for a set piece.

03

WHAT TO WATCH EARLY

On Wales' first three exits, note where New Zealand's next ruck forms. Returns that end beyond halfway are manageable. Repeated rucks already in Welsh territory are the signal that Wales will need to defend too many consecutive phases.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE PICK

A close opening quarter requires Wales to keep New Zealand's early possessions out of the Welsh 22.

< Match preview



ROUND 5 | MATCH 04 | ENGLAND'S PRESSURE VS JAPAN'S TEMPO

ENGLAND VS JAPAN

SAT 14 NOV | LONDON

Allianz Stadium

U.S. EASTERN / ET	U.S. PACIFIC / PT	U.K. & IRELAND / GMT	CENTRAL EUROPE / CET
11:40	08:40	16:40	17:40

ENGLAND | 3-1 | 15 PTS

42.5 scored / 24.8 allowed per game

Round 4: W 45-22 vs Australia

JAPAN | 1-3 | 5 PTS

20.8 scored / 29.0 allowed per game

Round 4: L 21-28 vs Wales

MATCH PREVIEW

England's seven-try win over Australia put them level with France on 170 points scored. The 73-8 July win over Fiji lifts that average, so the useful signal is the more recent 45-22 at Twickenham. Japan held Wales to a seven-point margin and won all 14 of their lineouts in Cardiff. That gives Japan a way to keep possession, especially if their first carry gets them over the gain line. England's edge comes from creating repeat entries after kicks and set pieces. Japan's chance is to keep those entries from piling up.

EDITORIAL PICK	PROJECTED | HOME-AWAY	CONFIDENCE
England	**42-19**	Moderate

Official match centre

Tactical keys >

MATCH 04 | TACTICAL PREVIEW

MATCH KEYS

England vs Japan

ROUND 4 INDICATORS

Numbers come from each team's previous fixture.

METRIC	ENGLAND *vs Australia*	JAPAN *vs Wales*
Tries	7	3
Lineouts won / total	16 / 17	14 / 14
Penalties conceded	7	6
Clean breaks	15	10

01

HOW ENGLAND CAN WIN

Use the kick chase to make Japan play near a touchline, then contest the next ruck selectively. On attack, keep a second carrier available off the first receiver. That gives England a way through the middle if Japan spread early to cover width.

02

HOW JAPAN CAN WIN

Use secure lineout ball to move the point of contact before England's defenders can set. A short pass and a quick recycle can create a second attack on the same side. If England's chase arrives first, take the safe exit and reset instead of forcing a wide pass from deep.

03

WHAT TO WATCH EARLY

Judge Japan's first three possessions after lineouts by where the second ruck occurs. If it is regularly beyond the gain line, Japan can dictate tempo. If it forms behind the first receiver, England can slow the recycle and force kicks under pressure.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE PICK

Japan can keep it close if clean lineouts lead to fast second-phase ball and England start most attacks from deep.

< Match preview



ROUND 5 | MATCH 05 | DUBLIN'S TERRITORY TEST

IRELAND VS FIJI

SAT 14 NOV | DUBLIN

Aviva Stadium

U.S. EASTERN / ET	U.S. PACIFIC / PT	U.K. & IRELAND / GMT	CENTRAL EUROPE / CET
15:10	12:10	20:10	21:10

IRELAND | 3-1 | 15 PTS

33.0 scored / 25.8 allowed per game

Round 4: W 42-12 vs Argentina

FIJI | 0-4 | 0 PTS

16.5 scored / 49.8 allowed per game

Round 4: L 17-54 vs France

MATCH PREVIEW

Ireland's 42-12 win over Argentina restored momentum after their July loss in New Zealand. Ireland won 17 of 19 lineouts in Dublin and scored six tries. Fiji are 0-4, but their two tries and eight clean breaks against France show why loose kicks and unprotected offloads are dangerous. The pick is Ireland to win through sustained territory and repeat visits to the 22. The score assumes they keep support close to the first carrier; if Fiji force turnover ball before Ireland's chase can set, the visitors can cut into the margin.

EDITORIAL PICK

Ireland

42-19

PROJECTED | HOME-AWAY

CONFIDENCE

Higher

Official match centre

Tactical keys >

MATCH 05 | TACTICAL PREVIEW

MATCH KEYS

Ireland vs Fiji

ROUND 4 INDICATORS

Numbers come from each team's previous fixture.

METRIC	IRELAND *vs Argentina*	FIJI *vs France*
Tries	6	2
Lineouts won / total	17 / 19	5 / 6
Penalties conceded	6	10
Clean breaks	15	8

01

HOW IRELAND CAN WIN

Build attacks off reliable lineout possession and ask the first carrier to bring a nearby support runner into contact. If Fiji close the short side, recycle before shifting the ball. Each clean ruck reduces the number of opportunities Fiji get to break from turnover ball.

02

HOW FIJI CAN WIN

Compete on the kicks you can actually reach and keep a second runner near the catcher. An isolated first receiver lets Ireland win the next ruck. Fiji's best attacking chances may come before Ireland reset, when a quick transfer after the first carry can open an edge.

03

WHAT TO WATCH EARLY

Separate Fiji's breaks from settled possession and breaks after loose Irish kicks or turnovers. The second category changes this matchup faster. If Ireland give up those chances and concede penalties on the retreat, they may have to score on a higher share of their own visits.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE PICK

Fiji's route to a tighter game is to turn kick returns and turnovers into points before Ireland reset their line.

< Match preview



ROUND 5 | MATCH 06 | A ONE-SCORE SUNDAY CALL

SCOTLAND VS AUSTRALIA

SUN 15 NOV | EDINBURGH

Scottish Gas Murrayfield

U.S. EASTERN / ET	U.S. PACIFIC / PT	U.K. & IRELAND / GMT	CENTRAL EUROPE / CET
10:10	07:10	15:10	16:10

SCOTLAND | 2-2 | 11 PTS

32.2 scored / 35.0 allowed per game

Round 4: L 21-43 vs New Zealand

AUSTRALIA | 1-3 | 8 PTS

34.0 scored / 32.5 allowed per game

Round 4: L 22-45 vs England

MATCH PREVIEW

Both sides lost in Round 4. Scotland gave up 43 to New Zealand; Australia conceded 45 to England. Australia have scored 136 points to Scotland's 129, but 57 of those came against Italy, so the aggregate offers little separation on its own. The Wallabies also pushed Ireland to 33-31 in July. Scotland get a small Murrayfield edge because they can score from structured possessions and put pressure on Australia's exits. The pick turns on territory and discipline. An early Australian lead would force Scotland to take more risks and could flip it.

EDITORIAL PICK		CONFIDENCE
Scotland	**31-28**	Low
	PROJECTED | HOME-AWAY	

Official match centre

Tactical keys >

MATCH 06 | TACTICAL PREVIEW

MATCH KEYS

Scotland vs Australia

ROUND 4 INDICATORS

Numbers come from each team's previous fixture.

METRIC	SCOTLAND *vs New Zealand*	AUSTRALIA *vs England*
Tries	3	3
Lineouts won / total	11 / 13	10 / 12
Penalties conceded	13	11
Clean breaks	11	9

01

HOW SCOTLAND CAN WIN

Use the kick chase to pin Australia near a touchline, then play from the first good lineout or scrum in their half. Secure the ruck after the first carry so Scotland can switch sides without inviting a turnover. Protect territory if the kick is on.

02

HOW AUSTRALIA CAN WIN

Defend the first two phases after a Scottish set piece with enough width to cover the release pass. With the ball, send an option inside the first receiver so Scotland cannot drift early. A line break matters most if Australia keep support close enough to finish it.

03

WHAT TO WATCH EARLY

Watch for penalties in each side's own half and what the opposition gets from the resulting entry. Scotland conceded 13 penalties against New Zealand, Australia 11 against England. A difference of two productive entries could be enough to decide this one.

WHAT COULD CHANGE THE PICK

If Australia win the exit battle and keep their own-half penalty count down, Scotland's home edge can vanish.

< Match preview

TWO ROUNDS REMAIN

THE FINALS RACE

Round 6: November 21 | Finals Weekend: November 27-29

NORTH: FRANCE LEAD BY TWO

France have 17 points, with England and Ireland on 15. Friday can move the race before the two chasers play on Saturday. Each side has up to ten points left to earn across Rounds 5 and 6.

SOUTH: TWO SIDES CAN FINISH FIRST

South Africa and New Zealand have 20 points each. Australia, third on eight, can reach at most 18. The title game will feature one of the two unbeaten South teams, with first place still open.

ROUND 6 | SAT 21 NOV

Kickoff: ET / PT / GMT / CET

England vs New Zealand	09:10 / 06:10 / 14:10 / 15:10
Scotland vs Japan	09:10 / 06:10 / 14:10 / 15:10
Ireland vs South Africa	11:40 / 08:40 / 16:40 / 17:40
Italy vs Fiji	11:40 / 08:40 / 16:40 / 17:40
France vs Argentina	15:10 / 12:10 / 20:10 / 21:10
Wales vs Australia	15:10 / 12:10 / 20:10 / 21:10

FINALS WEEKEND | TWICKENHAM

Kickoff: ET / PT / GMT / CET

Fri 27 Nov | N6 vs S6	11:40 / 08:40 / 16:40 / 17:40
Fri 27 Nov | N3 vs S3	15:10 / 12:10 / 20:10 / 21:10
Sat 28 Nov | N5 vs S5	08:10 / 05:10 / 13:10 / 14:10
Sat 28 Nov | N2 vs S2	11:40 / 08:40 / 16:40 / 17:40
Sun 29 Nov | N4 vs S4	08:10 / 05:10 / 13:10 / 14:10
Sun 29 Nov | N1 vs S1 | TITLE	11:40 / 08:40 / 16:40 / 17:40

The North and South teams with the same pool rank meet at Allianz Stadium, Twickenham. N1 vs S1 decides the title; the other pairings decide places 3 through 12.

DIGITAL WORLD PULSE

THE SIX PICKS

Projected scores | Home team first | November 9 editorial snapshot

MATCHUP	SCORE	WINNER	CONFIDENCE
France vs South Africa Best points-against record; toughest road test yet.	**27-31**	South Africa	*Low*
Italy vs Argentina Argentina have shown more scoring range across four rounds.	**20-33**	Argentina	*Moderate*
Wales vs New Zealand Four wins and a reliable platform for multi-phase attack.	**21-38**	New Zealand	*Moderate*
England vs Japan Twickenham field position and repeat entries favor England.	**42-19**	England	*Moderate*
Ireland vs Fiji Dublin and the clearest contrast in four-round results.	**42-19**	Ireland	*Higher*
Scotland vs Australia A small Murrayfield edge in a matchup with little separation.	**31-28**	Scotland	*Low*

WHERE THE CALLS ARE TIGHTEST

France-South Africa is the highest-stakes fixture of the round: both teams lead their pools. Scotland-Australia is the narrowest projected margin. In both games, watch whether the home side can turn field position into tries.

HOW TO READ CONFIDENCE

Low: a small lean with a credible route for either side. Moderate: a clearer matchup advantage that can shift with execution. Higher: the strongest lean in this guide. These are qualitative judgments; no score or outcome is assured.

EDITORIAL NOTES

SOURCES & DISCLAIMER

Schedule, table and match data checked on November 9, 2026

Nations Championship | Official fixtures and results
Round 4 scores, Round 5 venues and kickoffs, Round 6 and finals slots.

Nations Championship | Tables and stats
Pool rules, bonus points and order of tiebreakers.

RugbyPass | Standings and tables
Published North and South tables after four matches per team.

RugbyPass | Fixtures and results
Independent fixture display used to cross-check dates and matchups.

Nations Championship | Format and FAQs
Competition structure and information on Finals Weekend.

The match links on pages 3, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 open official fixture or match-centre pages. The Round 4 match centres supply the tries, lineouts, penalties and clean breaks used in the guide.

PREDICTION METHOD

We compare results, points for and against, the latest match indicators, venue and likely tactical matchups. The four-game scoring averages are descriptive and vary with opponent strength. Projected scores are editorial estimates, shown home team first.

DISCLAIMER

Digital World Pulse is an independent publication. This guide is for information and entertainment and is not betting advice. Fixtures, kickoff times and team selections may change; check official match pages before making plans. Images are illustrations.