

Japan At World Cup 2026: Endoâ??s Last Dance, Nagatomoâ??s Record And The Samurai Blueâ??s North America Quest

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Japanâ??s **World Cup 2026** squad has been finalised, and Hajime Moriyasuâ??s Samurai Blue are heading to North America with a blend of Premier League star power, European nous and some deeply personal stories. Captain Wataru Endo leads the charge, while Yuto Nagatomo chases a record that may never be broken. For Singaporeâ??s legion of football fans, Japanâ??s journey through Group F is one to watch very closely indeed.

Japan World Cup 2026 Squad: Premier League Power And European Experience



Source: Premier League official website (premierleague.com)

Moriyasu named a 26-man roster on 15 May 2026 that showcases just how far Japanese football has travelled in a generation. The spine of the squad is built around players competing weekly at the highest level of European football, with Liverpoolâ??s Wataru Endo captaining a side that has earned genuine respect from continental powers.

Endoâ??s road to these finals was not easy. A knee injury disrupted much of his 2025â??26 Premier League campaign with Liverpool, raising doubts over his fitness. But the midfielder confirmed his inclusion with a heartfelt message: â??Iâ??m glad to be in the Japan squad for the World Cup. It wasnâ??t an easy way to recover from the injury, but I believed in myself.â?• Japan fans exhaled. Their captain is fit, and ready.

Elsewhere, Crystal Palaceâ??s Daichi Kamada and Leeds Unitedâ??s Ao Tanaka provide midfield depth and Premier League grit. Real Sociedadâ??s **Takefusa Kubo** â?? arguably the most technically gifted player in the squad â?? carries the creative burden, capable of the unexpected at any moment. Junya Ito adds pace and directness from wide areas, while the defensive unit looks settled under Ko Itakura and Hiroki Ito.

Yuto Nagatomoâ??s Historic Fifth World Cup With Japan

The biggest personal storyline of Japanâ??s campaign belongs to **Yuto Nagatomo**, the veteran left-back who is set to become the first Asian player to compete at five different FIFA World Cups. Now 35, Nagatomo has been part of every chapter of Japanâ??s modern football story â?? from South Africa 2010 to Brazil 2014, Russia 2018, Qatar 2022, and now North America 2026. That longevity is extraordinary, and it speaks to his professionalism and the depth of the relationship between Nagatomo and the Samurai Blue badge.

For Singapore fans who have watched Nagatomoâ??s career from his early days at Inter Milan through to his remarkable late-career renaissance, this World Cup appearance feels like a proper farewell lap. A walking piece of Japanese football history.

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Group F Breakdown: Japan Face Netherlands, Tunisia And Sweden



Source: Liverpool FC official website (liverpoolfc.com)

Japan have been drawn into **Group F**, and it is a group that promises real drama. Their schedule reads:

- **14 June** â?? Japan vs Netherlands
- **21 June** â?? Japan vs Tunisia
- **26 June** â?? Japan vs Sweden

The Netherlands â?? featuring Liverpoolâ??s Virgil van Dijk, Cody Gakpo and Ryan Gravenberch â?? are the groupâ??s standout force. Ronald Koemanâ??s side will be heavy favourites in that opening match, but Japan have a knack for upsetting European heavyweights at World Cups. Remember

Germany and Spain in Qatar 2022? Moriyasuâ??s team know how to defend deep, absorb pressure and strike on the counter with precision. Expect van Dijk and co to have a very uncomfortable 90 minutes.

Tunisia should be manageable for Japan, while Sweden â?? boosted by Arsenal striker **Viktor Gyokeres** and a solid defensive structure â?? will test Japanâ??s backline in what could be a nervy final group game. Qualification for the round of 16 is realistic, and another deep run is not beyond them.

You can check how Japanâ??s Group F opponents are shaping up in our full Netherlands World Cup 2026 squad guide. For the full tournament context, donâ??t miss our Germany World Cup 2026 squad breakdown and the Sports section for all our World Cup coverage leading up to the tournament.

Japan kick off their campaign on **14 June 2026**. Set the alarm, Singapore â?? this one is worth staying up for.

Date Created
04/06/2026
Author
jadeyeo

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