

No quarter given

The lowdown on the eight teams left as the Rugby World Cup 2019 knockout stages get under way



Webb Ellis Trophy

3

World ranking



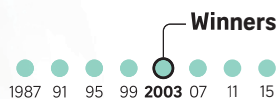
OWEN FARRELL
At the heart of England's weird wobbles of late and of his club Saracens' complete lack of them. He sets the tone.

SATURDAY BIG MATCH, 3.15pm

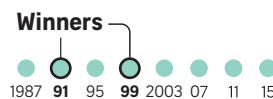
ENGLAND 🇬🇧

3 v 6

AUSTRALIA 🇦🇺



Best RWC finish
Participated



Owen Farrell	25	Most points	18	Matt Toomua
Luke Cowan-Dickie	3	Most tries	3	Dane Haylett-Petty

Previous meetings



37	Nov 2018	18
30	Nov 2017	6
37	Dec 2016	21



England have not been above criticism in their three bonus-point wins out of three. But, as the quality of the opposition improved, they have got better as well. Mature heads will be needed to negotiate the leap to a clash with Australia, who have not exactly impressed but can play a bit when the situation demands. Wallabies coach Michael Cheika has been firing shots at all targets, creating a siege mentality.

6

World ranking



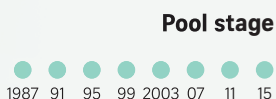
DAVID POCOCK
Player of the last World Cup, even if Australia did not win it. Signs are he could be peaking for his last tilt at glory.

SUNDAY BIG MATCH, 6.15pm

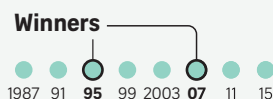
JAPAN 🇯🇵

7 v 5

SOUTH AFRICA 🇿🇦



Best RWC finish
Participated



Yu Tamura	48	Most points	28	Elton Jantjies
Kotaro Matsushima	5	Most tries	3	Cobus Reinach, Makazole Mapiimpi, Mbongeni Mbonambi

Previous meetings



7	Sept 2019	41
34	Sept 2015	32



In the rematch of the most famous upset of 2015, Japan, undisputed stars of this Cup, will not be 42-point underdogs this time. The sheer heft of South Africa would quash further Japanese glory. The template for a Japan victory is the same, the fast and the skilful. The Springboks can play a bit too, but their trump card is power and strength of mind.

KAZUKI HIMENO
If South Africa deal in power, this is Japan's answer. The No. 8 has been destructive with ball in hand.

Key players

CHESLIN KOLBE
If Japan deal in pace, this is South Africa's answer. Scarcely believable speed.



Saturday, 6.15pm

NEW ZEALAND 🇳🇿

1 v 4

IRELAND 🇮🇪



Best RWC finish
Participated



Jordie Barrett, Richie Mo'unga	26	Most points	26	Johnny Sexton
Anton Lienert-Brown, Ben Smith	2	Most tries	3	Andrew Conway

Previous meetings

9	Nov 2018	16
21	Nov 2016	9
29	Nov 2016	40

Key players



BEAUDEN BARRETT

Often feted as the best player in the world because, when on form, he is untouchable. It is when he is not that the problems start.



CONOR MURRAY

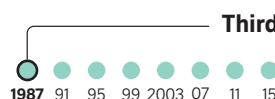
The difference between Ireland with Murray and Johnny Sexton and Ireland without is huge. Murray's authority is central to that.

Sunday, 3.15pm

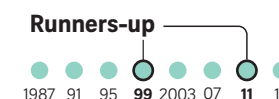
WALES 🇬🇼

2 v 8

FRANCE 🇫🇷



Best RWC finish
Participated



Josh Adams	25	Most points	23	Romain Ntamack
Josh Adams	5	Most tries	2	Alivereti Raka

Previous meetings

14	March 2018	13
18	March 2017	20
19	Feb 2016	10

Key players



ALUN WYN JONES

He tackles and he tackles and he tackles. He is (down-to-earth) Wales, in a nutshell.



ANTOINE DUPONT

If the brilliant France turn up, this guy will be at the heart of it. Or Maxime Machenaud will. Or Baptiste Serin. They have options at scrum-half.

Wales flattered against Fiji and battered against Australia. But they keep on winning and have emerged with the gravitas of pool winners. France, almost their exact opposite, can be unplayable (as Wales know only too well from the first half of this year's Six Nations opener) and they can hand you the game on a plate (as Wales know from the second).