



France's Kylian Mbappé and the U.S. Men's National Team Highlight Dual Covers of Sports Illustrated's World Cup Preview Issue

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Inside the December issue of Sports Illustrated, available at [SI.com](https://www.si.com) and on newsstands today: Can the U.S. Men's National Team, led by Christian Pulisic, Weston McKennie and Tyler Adams, make a name for itself in Qatar?; Will France, with global superstar Kylian Mbappé, repeat as World Cup champion?; Everything you need to know about the world's biggest sporting event. Plus, inside the NFL's long-snapper subculture; looking back at the Memphis Grizzlies' rocky franchise origins; the story of an inspiring high school football star, and more.

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Nov. 10, 2022-- It's been eight years since the U.S. Men's National Team competed in the World Cup, and the youngest team in this year's tournament is to establish itself as a power in Qatar and for years to come. In [Young and Hungry](#), [Brian Straus](#) examines the tight-knit and ambitious culture manager Gregg Berhalter has created around the U.S. program. With the second cover of its World Cup Preview, [Sports Illustrated](#) spotlights global megastar Kylian Mbappé, who is determined to make France the first repeat World Cup champion in 60 years. In [The Champ Is Here](#), also by Brian Straus, Mbappé reflects on how being the first teenager since Pelé to score a goal in a World Cup final catapulted him to superstar status in 2018 and ushered in a new level of expectations for him and his country. The World Cup Preview issue is on sale at newsstands today and at [SI.com/issues](https://www.si.com/issues), with more features below.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20221110005778/en/>



Global superstar Kylian Mbappé on the cover of Sports Illustrated, on sale now. (Photo: Business Wire)

season—they're essential to success. Inside the economy and evolution of these NFL specialist's specialists, from [Alex Prewitt](#).

Qatar 2022: World Cup Preview

- **Young and Hungry:** The U.S.'s recent World Cup history has not been pretty, but the current USMNT represents a chance for a fresh start with a young roster lacking experience but full of talent. Their performance in Qatar will be a referendum on our world soccer standing and this country's increased focus on developing soccer talent, according to [Brian Straus](#).
- **The Champ Is Here:** After leading France to the 2018 World Cup title, Kylian Mbappé became a global superstar. He's the world's most expensive player, arguably its most talented—and on the cusp of bringing his complicated country a rare World Cup repeat.
- **The Road to the World Cup:** A timeline of Qatar's complicated path to hosting. Plus, Sports Illustrated breaks down the favorites, the wild cards and the matches to watch for each of the eight World Cup groups. Plus, SI's predictions for the knockout stage. SI's call for the final: Brazil over France.
- **The [Not Always] Sweet Science of Penalty Kicks:** [Ben Lyttleton](#) examines the World Cup penalty kick and how it might be the most dramatic moment in sports. Match-deciding shootouts might look like they come down to dumb luck, but the psychology and preparation behind them are deep.

Other Features

- **The Upside Down World of Long Snappers:** Long snappers might be the most overlooked players in football but—as a handful of NFL teams have discovered this

- **Northern Lightweights:** [Jon Wertheim](#) details the Memphis Grizzlies' origin story—they're the darlings of the NBA, with a cult-like following and a young superstar in Ja Morant. But the franchise's start in Vancouver two decades ago wasn't nearly as exciting. Wertheim examines the NBA's learning experience of having a team in Vancouver, and how many fans there dream about the league's potential return to their city.
- **Same As Always, And Like Never Before:** When Brandon Thomas, a talented high school linebacker in Eastern Washington, was diagnosed with cancer, a leg amputation gave him his best chance at survival. Two years later, Thomas is more than surviving: the senior is thriving as a student and a player, dominating on the field, weighing his options to play in college and reflecting on how his love of football powered his inspiring recovery. By [Greg Bishop](#).
- **When Bo Chose Baseball:** We all remember Bo Jackson as the ultimate two-sport star, but he might not have made it to MLB if the hapless 1980s Buccaneers hadn't mucked up his NFL ambitions. In an excerpt from his new biography, [Jeff Pearlman](#) explores a forgotten fork in Bo's path to baseball and football stardom.

Also in this issue:

- **Leading Off:** A snapshot of the Heisman race, contender by contender: Blake Corum, C.J. Stroud, Stetson Bennett, Caleb Williams, Hendon Hooker and Bryce Young.
- **Scorecard:** Alex Prewitt on Qatar and the art of greenwashing, which is sports organizations claiming to be more eco-conscious than they really are.
- **SI Gameplan:** Mark Bechtel reviews Netflix's Redeem Team documentary.
- **SI Eats:** Celebrity chef Tom Colicchio discusses his fandom of the North Carolina Men's Basketball Team and what meal he would make for the entire team if requested.
- **SI Full Frame:** The U.S.'s last strong World Cup run from 2002.
- **MLB offseason forecast:** The Top 25 free agents this offseason.
- **The World At His Feet:** Bert Patenaude is highlighted as the USMNT's shining star at the very first World Cup.

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