

## Bulletin 16 – 19 December 2022

### Argentina 3 - 3 France AET (Penalties 4-2)

The tournament has produced a myriad of exciting matches and Sunday's finale was certainly another and will surely go down in World Cup history as one of the all time classics. Contested between two well backed sides, holders France and two time winners Argentina, the stage was set with the world's best ready to go head-to-head in the Lusail Stadium, which definitely felt more like Buenos Aires than Paris given the overwhelming majority of fans supporting Messi's men.

It was in fact Messi (or should I say Pessi) who opened the scoring too from another spot kick, to become the first man to score in every round of a World Cup finals as the Argies seem to startle Les Bleus in the opening exchanges, sparking two first half substitutes from Didier Deschamps. Angel Di Maria doubled their deserved lead before half time in what would be his final international appearance before he hung up his boots. The South American side cantered into the break two nil up. Game over?

The first half hour or so of the second period brought very little to write about, Argentina looking to sit on their lead and France not much short of lacklustre and struggling to get into the groove, but a French penalty with ten minutes to go was more than enough to bring the contest back to life. Kylian Mbappe calmly converted then added a second just seconds later with a sublime finish to pull France level from almost nowhere. Surely it would not be heartbreak again for La Albiceleste? Some chances late on for both sides went begging as the game opened up and it remained level at two each at the end of normal time, with no complaints from neutral fans that there would now be an additional thirty minutes play to come!

The first half of extra time ended goalless but in the opening minutes of the final fifteen it was Argentina back in front, courtesy of their captain once more but with just two minutes left a third penalty of the game gave France a chance to take the match to penalties, Mbappe stepped up once more and looked perhaps the coolest man in the stadium as he sent Emi Martinez the wrong way, bagging only the second hat-trick in World Cup final history. So penalties it was to be - not before some last minute chances for both sides though - Martinez producing an excellent stop to deny Kolo Muani.

Mbappe scored his third penalty of the clash to open the shootout, Messi matched but then came the turning point as a combination of nerves, pressure and Emi Martinez mind games lead to Les Bleus failing to convert the next two kicks leaving Argentina very much in the driving seat and it was Gonzalo Montiel who eventually scored the decisive penalty, rounding off a flawless four, to confirm it would be the South Americans adding their name to the trophy for the third time.

### Spot Kick Specialists

The new champions have taken part in – and won – more shootouts than anyone else (7 and 6) so perhaps it shouldn't be a surprise it was Messi lifting the trophy on Sunday evening. It was also only the third final to go a tiebreaker and the first since Italy lifted the trophy in 2006 who avenged their shootout defeat versus Brazil in the 1994 final.



## Results

Now onto the proper competition. Congratulations to **Gary Symons** who is this year's champion, he correctly predicted both Mbappe as top goalscorer and Argentina to lift the trophy (well done too **Rob Walker**, **Jasper Ellis**, **William Rose**, **Peter Norman** and **Michael O'Donnell** for the same feat). Long time leader **Matthew Allen** finishes in a very respectable sixth place as **Andy Wyatt** collects the wooden spoon.

**Thanks to everyone for taking part this year and we hope you have an enjoyable festive season.**

**Neil Kennedy, James Allen & George Metcalf**

Ranking	Player	Points	Daily Ranking Change	Daily Points Change
1	Gary Symons	413	+3	+60
2	Rob Walker	408	+5	+60
3	Dan Jinks	398	-2	+30
4	Bailey Coe	385	-1	+30
5	Andrew Pritchard	379	+1	+30
6	Matthew Allen	376	+2	+30
7	Mark Warnes	372	+2	+30
8	Jasper Ellis	364	+21	+60
9	Neil Kennedy	363	+1	+30
10	William Rose	362	+21	+60
11	Emma Robinson	356	-	+30
11	Oliver Nicholls	356	-9	-
13	Michael Johnson	353	+1	+30
13	Usman Asif	353	+1	+30
15	Ashraf Mitha	352	+1	+30
16	Andrew Hall	350	+1	+30
16	James Gardner	350	-11	-
16	Tim Jones	350	+1	+30
19	Darren Goodall	345	+2	+30
19	Olly Roper	345	+2	+30
21	Peter Norman	339	+31	+60
22	Stan Hutchinson	338	+5	+30
23	Tim Poil	332	+8	+30
24	Richard Stoddart	326	+11	+30
25	Chris Williams	325	+11	+30
25	Daniel Sirl	325	-13	-
25	James Saxton	325	-13	-
28	James Allen	324	+9	+30
29	Eesha Savani	317	+13	+30
30	John Small	316	-11	-
30	Mara Aleixo	316	-11	-
32	Graham Edmonds	315	+13	+30
33	Nick Saxton	314	+14	+30
34	Ian Metcalf	313	+14	+30
34	Steve Higginbottom	313	-11	-
34	Stephen Kilgannon	313	-11	-
37	Ed Winstanley	311	-12	-
37	Mark Rowlinson	311	+13	+30



Ranking	Player	Points	Daily Ranking Change	Daily Points Change
39	Amrita Dasgupta	309	-13	-
40	Duncan Carter	308	-13	-
41	Ross Bennett	305	+17	+30
42	John McLeod	304	-13	-
43	Paul Marriott	300	-10	-
44	Eddie Hopkin	298	+17	+30
44	Luke Vickers	298	-10	-
46	Stuart Briely	295	+17	+30
47	Craig Moran	294	-10	-
47	Mike Common	294	+17	+30
49	Ivan Taylor	293	+17	+30
50	George Kennedy	292	-11	-
50	Marcus Johansson	292	-11	-
52	Jonathan Hugh	289	-11	-
53	Dale Walmsley	287	+16	+30
53	Katie Sutton	287	-11	-
55	Talha Gulzar	286	-11	-
56	George Bilsby	285	-11	-
57	Rob Young	284	+14	+30
57	Tim Barlow	284	+14	+30
59	Mel Wilson	283	-11	-
60	George Hinkley	280	-9	-
61	Sean Delaney	279	-9	-
62	Chris Marson	278	-8	-
62	Dan Chapman	278	-8	-
64	Derek Allen	277	-8	-
64	John Stock	277	-8	-
66	Larisa Wood	274	-7	-
67	Michael Garland	271	+10	+30
68	Sharon Royston	269	-8	-
69	George Metcalf	268	-8	-
70	Hilary Salt	264	+8	+30
70	Richard Noutch	264	-6	-
72	Wendy Ludman	263	-6	-
73	Michael O'Donnell	262	+17	+60
74	Charlotte Adshead	258	-6	-
75	Josh Titley	257	-6	-
76	Zoe Sadler	256	+5	+30
77	Bex Thompson	254	+6	+30
77	James Milligan	254	-6	-
79	Katie Morgan	252	-5	-
80	Jamie McLeod	250	-5	-
81	Sam Ashworth	244	-5	-
82	Charlotte White	232	-3	-
83	Joe Bronstein	228	-3	-
84	Max Mauchline	225	-2	-
85	Benjamin Robinson	222	-1	-
86	Phil Mann	221	-1	-
87	Toni Johnson	220	-1	-
88	Henry Tapper	218	-1	-



Ranking	Player	Points	Daily Ranking Change	Daily Points Change
89	Chas Goddard	210	-1	-
89	Kieran Armstrong	210	-1	-
91	Lance Havell	192	-	-
91	Owen Adams	192	-	-
93	Claire Herbert	186	-	-
94	Andy Wyatt	137	-	-

