

Sons of Norway District 5 - Friendly Fifth Friday News
May 29, 2026
A District Weekly Newsletter to Keep Us Up to Date!

An Invitation from Idun Lodge in Madison, WI

Thursday, June 18, 2026

A Day in Mt. Horeb, WI

11:30 am Lunch at Grumpy Troll (105 South 2nd Street)

1:00 pm Tour of Driftless Historium (including behind the scenes)—across 2nd Street

Reservations due by June 11, 2026.

Send your entree choice and check to Lucy Ghastin, 7130 Century Ave., Middleton, WI 53562.

Make check payable to Idun Lodge.

Any questions: email leghastin@gmail.com or call 608-225-1412.

Cost: \$5 (Idun members)

\$20 (other Sons of Norway lodges)

\$25 (Non-Sons of Norway members)

Menu: Select one

_____ Under the Bridge Reuben

_____ Pesto Chicken

_____ Tuscan Salad (w/chicken)

_____ Grilled Salmon Salad

Summer Fun- Nordic Fest in Decorah, IA



July 23–25, 2026

What is Nordic Fest? https://youtu.be/c-NjG_vnisE?si=TwLGfDHszZocQrXo

Wondering what to expect at Nordic Fest? While specific entertainment and event details are announced closer to the event dates each year, the overall rhythm of the festival remains a beloved tradition. From opening ceremonies to the final fireworks farewell, here's a look at the general flow of the weekend. *For detailed daily schedules, performance lineups, and event times, look for the yearly program (debuting each June).

<https://nordicfest.com/general-schedule/>

Are You Ready for Some Fotball !

Norway's Quest For 2026 World Cup Glory - By Carl Rasmussen, Editor



With the Winter Olympics completed, the main conversation and attention in Norway pubs and homes can now turn to the 2026 World Cup. Last Fall, the Norwegian "Landslaget" (National Soccer team) qualified for their first World Cup appearance in 28 years! This year the World Cup will be hosted across: Canada, Mexico, and the United States. With a total of 16 host cities, this

should make the competition one of the most accessible World Cup tournaments for Norwegian Americans in history. No need to get up in the middle of the night! The matches will occur in all four U.S. time zones.

Our Jan-Feb Vennligblad described Norway's National Team's first match on Tuesday, June 16, 2026, in Boston's Foxborough Stadium at 5 PM CDT. Readers were encouraged to mark their calendars for this event.

This writer originally thought Norway's June 16 match would be a "one and done" with the winner advancing and loser headed home. **UFFDA!** Instead, the World Cup tournament begins with a "round-robin" play-in competition. To advance (or go home), Norway must first play two additional matches against two other national teams to determine their fate. So, my kind readers can also add Monday, June 22 at 7 p.m. CDT and Friday, June 26 at 2 PM CDT to your calendars for a total of three matches to watch!

Norway's first opponent (June 16) will be against the winner of a small play-in tournament between Bolivia, Suriname, and Iraq on March 26 and 31. Norway's June 22 opponent will be Senegal, Africa in East Rutherford, NJ. Senegal is described as a "powerhouse known for their incredible speed and physical play." Norway's third opponent is the formidable France, winner of the 2018 World Cup and first runner-up champion in 2022. France is the heavy favorite in 2026 and arguably one of the three best teams in the world. It will be an early test of Norway's strength. The June 26 match will be back in Boston. All games will be broadcast live on Fox TV.

Two teams advance out of Group One: the winner and the first runner-up. If Norway wins it all or comes in second place, their next match will be in Philadelphia on June 29 or New Jersey on June 30. These will begin true knockout matches all the way to the final World Cup. Pencil these two dates in as well!

Norway would need to win four additional knockout games to reach the "winner take all" World Cup Champion match. Dates and locations for these matches are determined by which bracket a team enters. A total of 48 teams begin the June competition. After all first round-robins finish, 32 teams move forward.

The tournament's pinnacle, the World Cup Championship match will be Sunday July 19 in MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, NJ at 2:00 PM (CDT) on Fox TV.

The World Cup is often referred to the "Super Bowl of soccer. Yet, while the Super Bowl is huge in the United States with roughly 120 million viewers, the final World Cup on July 19 will be watched by over 1.5 billion people! It is the only sporting event that truly stops the entire planet every four years!

Odds of Winning: So, what are the chances of Norway advancing to the World Cup final? Are we pinning hopes on our hearts instead of our heads? Are we primed for let down by committing emotional energy to an unrealistic goal?

Fear not. Though the 28-year wait has been a long one for many "Landslaget" supporters, the timing could not be better. A confluence of generational riches has emerged and is ready to make a showing. Historically, while Norway has not consistently fielded a top-tier team since the 1990's, they currently are one of the most talked about teams in the world because they are entering the 2026 World Cup with their best squad in history. Norway's "Golden Generation" makes them a "dark horse" favorite.

During the grueling Cup qualification process, Norway famously won all eight of its matches handily. This includes a stunning 4-1 clincher against top-tiered Italy. Combined with a second match against Italy last June 2025, Norway did not just beat the Italians twice, they dismantled them 7 to 1 over two matches. Significantly, Norway's eight-game qualifying win streak was part of a larger 11 game win streak. The first three wins of the streak included high score breakouts against solid teams 12 goals to 1.

The average age of the current Norwegian squad is approximately 26 years old. In the world of professional soccer, this is often considered the "statistical peak." It means the players have moved past the inexperience of youth but have not yet hit the physical decline that comes in the early 30s.

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Quest for World Cup Glory

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While it takes a full squad to win, the following four players represent the heart, soul, and muscle of the "Golden Generation" of 2026 Landslaget. In the past, Norway usually had one or two "stars" supported by very hardworking, disciplined players. Norway 2026 has multiple players who are considered among the best in the world at their specific positions. They aren't just going to the World Cup to "take photos"—they are going with a realistic goal of reaching the Quarterfinals and beyond. This team is built on world-class attacking talent namely:

- **Erling Haaland** "The Viking Striker" who plays for Manchester City, England, age 25; A 6'5" "Viking" who grew up in Bryne, Norway. He is currently the most feared goalscorer in the world, having shattered records in the English Premier League.
- **Martin Ødegaard** Midfielder, "The Captain & Architect" Age: 27; who plays for Arsenal in North London, England. A child prodigy from Drammen who made his professional debut at age 15 and was signed by the legendary Real Madrid at just 16. He is the "engine room" of the team.
- **Oscar Bobb**, Winger, "The Rising Spark" plays for Manchester City, England, age: 22 Born and raised in Oslo, Bobb's journey took him from the local youth club to the prestigious Manchester City in England. If Haaland is the hammer, Bobb is the scalpel. A technical winger with dazzling "dancing" feet, he is known for his ability to weave through defenders in tight spaces. He represents the "new" Norway—creative, fearless, and world-class from a very young age.



- **Kristoffer Ajer** Defender, "The Defensive Anchor" age: 27 plays for Brentford, West London, England. The defensive anchor who will be tasked with stopping the likes of France's offense

Though France is the titan of Norway's play-in group, Norway is widely expected to battle Senegal for the second-place spot and advance. As mentioned, in the World Cup 48 team format, the top two teams from each group and, the eight best third-place teams out of the 16, advance to the Round of 32.

Of the other Nordic countries, Sweden and Denmark still have play-in matches March 31 against different teams. Both can reach Round of 48 with wins. Both the Iceland and Finland teams have already been eliminated. The United States, Canada, and Mexico are already part of the 48 team first round play since they are all host countries.

Whether you are a lifelong fan or just looking for a reason to wear your Norway Reds and wave the Norsk Flag, this summer promises to provide a long remembered Midsummer. Stay tuned for additional World Cup details in the May-June issue of Vennligblad as the excitement builds!

Heia Norge! (GO NORWAY! - Pronounced: Hey-ah Nor-geh)

R U Ready for Some Fotball !! – Part 2

Norway's Quest For 2026 World Cup Glory - By Carl Rasmussen, Editor



This Part 2 article continues from our March-April Vennligblad as the excitement builds for Norway's first appearance in World Cup Soccer competition since 1998.



Norway's opponent in the World Cup first round on **Tuesday, June 16, 2026** will be Iraq which emerged from their March qualifying tournament in Mexico.

The June 16 match takes place in Boston's Foxborough Stadium and will be broadcast on Fox TV beginning at 5PM. Norway then competes in two follow-up matches: one, **Monday, June 22** against Senegal, Africa and the second, **Friday, June 26** against the number one rated team in the world, France. The outcome of these three matches determines if Norway moves forward to bracket competition with single game elimination play over the three weeks that follow.

With 48 teams competing across 16 host cities, the 2026 competition will be the largest World Cup ever. The World Cup will also be the first tournament hosted by three countries – United States, Mexico, and Canada. Eleven U.S. cities will host playoff matches including: Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, Seattle, and the San Francisco Bay Area.

FOX Sports will be the exclusive U.S. television broadcast home up to and including the World Cup Championship on Sunday July 19. Over a span of 39 days, the Fox network will carry all [104 soccer](#) tournament matches live on either FOX (with 70 matches) or FS1 (with 34 matches).

Soccer 101: A Primer for "American Football" Fans

If you are only used to NFL football, then soccer or [fotball](#) as it is called in Norway and most of the world, might feel completely "foreign." The following is designed to help you better understand and enjoy the competition particularly as you follow Norway and other teams including team USA:

- As with the Olympics, the **World Cup** is played only every four years. The anticipation builds!
- **The Clock Never Stops:** The match is divided into two halves of 45 minutes each. Unlike American football, the clock counts **up** to 45 minutes each half. At the end of each half a referee adds "stoppage time" to account for injuries and other "stoppages." Otherwise, the game is continuous with no commercial breaks.

- The break for halftime is 15 minutes. Expect commercials then!
- The 2026 World Cup competition is adding a new significant change to the clock though: in the middle of each half, a mandatory 3-minute "**hydration break**" for "**player welfare.**" This effectively splits the match into four quarters. The break will occur roughly 22 minutes into both halves starting on a referee's whistle. Count on commercials during this time too!
- **11 vs. 11:** Each team has 11 players, only goalkeepers can touch the ball with their hands.
- **A "Nil" is Not Meaningless:** A 0-0 (nil-nil) tie score might seem like a bore, but in round-robin play when it comes to advancing, a tie is not as bad as a loss. Things change when it comes to elimination games.
- For elimination games tied at the end of play, the game enters "**extra time.**" The match is extended by 30 minutes, divided into two 15-minute periods with a short break in between. There is no "sudden death" where the first team to score wins the game. It is the team with the most goals at the end of "**extra time**" that is winner
- If teams are still tied after "extra time" the game is settled with a **penalty shootout** where each team selects five players to take turns shooting the ball one on one with the goalie. A coin toss decides which team kicks first. The team that scores the most goals out of five attempts wins. If still tied after that, only then is sudden death put into effect with the first team to score a "penalty kick" is the winner. It helps to win the coin flip as that team will be first to kick!
- **FIFA** is the abbreviation of the French name for the Football Federation: *Fédération Internationale de Football Association*. FIFA is the international self-regulatory governing body of "association football." Founded in 1904, FIFA is headquartered in Switzerland and comprises 211 national associations. **FIFA play** is different from **Professional Soccer** (see the following article for more information!)
- Until 1978, only 16 teams competed for the World Cup. Beginning in 1982 this increased to 24 teams, in 1998 to 32 teams and in 2026 now there will be the 48 teams in bracket play competition out of a possible 211.
- **Global Scale:** While the Super Bowl is huge in the United States with roughly 137 million viewers, the World Cup Final is gigantic! It will be watched by over **1.5 billion people**. It is truly the only event that stops the entire planet waiting to see the outcome!

Continued . . .

Professional Vs Association Football

Our March-April Vennligblad introduced four key players for Norway: #9 Erling Haaland; #10 Martin Ødegaard; #22 Oscar Bobb; and #20 Kristoffer Ajer. Forward Erling Haaland and Winger Oscar Bobb play for the same professional team: Manchester City Club in Manchester, England. Manchester City is one of the most dominant soccer clubs in the world. Midfielder Martin Ødegaard plays for Arsenal of the Premier League in North London, England; and Defender Kristoffer Ajer plays for Brentford Football Club in West London, England, also a Premier League Club. All four of these stars play in the English Premier League, widely considered the most difficult and prestigious soccer league in the world.

In total, 18 of 24 Norway's roster play for pro-teams in other countries. A good way to understand this would be how hockey is played at the Olympics. Just like the Olympics, the World Cup is played only once every four years and like Olympic hockey, in World Soccer there is a clear distinction between **Clubs** (professional teams with paid players) and **Associations** (home country teams playing for national honor and pride). FIFA, the world-governing body, requires Clubs to "release" pro-players to their home countries for the World Cup competition. The players fly home, put on a home jersey, and play usually for little or no salary.

While most players on the Norwegian team were born and raised in Norway, FIFA rules allow players to represent a country based on three main connections: 1) **Birth**, 2) **Ancestry** (if one's parents or grandparents were born there) and, 3) **Residency** (if a player has lived and worked in the country for at least five years as an adult.)

Interestingly, Norway's biggest star, Erling Haaland, was born in Leeds, England. He is eligible to play for England. However, because both his parents are Norwegian and he grew up in Bryne, Norway, he chose to represent his "heart" country.

This is the same for other World Cup teams as well and makes many teams incredibly nationally diverse. Many players on the US National Team were born in Germany or England to American military parents. France's 2018 and 2022 squads were famous for having many players born in, or with parents from former French territories and African nations like Senegal, Mali, and Algeria. In the 2022 World Cup, more than half of Morocco's players were born in Europe (The Netherlands, Belgium, and France) but chose to play for their parents' homeland instead.

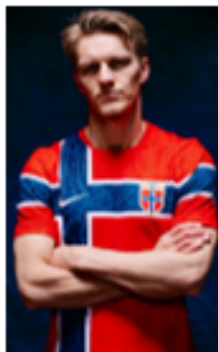
Dress For Success – The Full Kit and Caboodle!

Soccer jerseys are called kits. Norway officially unveiled its World Cup kit on March 19 and they have been flying off the racks since then! Reflecting Norway's flag, the kit features a classic chili-red base with a deep navy-blue cross across the chest outlined in white. Inside the blue stripes is an intricate Nordic knot weave pattern inspired by carvings at the entrance to the Urnes Stave Church, Norway's oldest.



The Viking-era design links Norway's modern sport team to its ancient Viking heritage and craftsmanship.

An embroidered national soccer team crest completes the kit and features a national flag shield topped by two lions from the Norwegian coat of arms. The lions hold a miniature blue Norwegian Football Federation (NFF) logo with "NORGE" (Norway) inscribed above. The bold contrasts create a dynamic effect, making the entire kit both eye-catching and symbolic.



Officially licensed, high-performance, Dri-FIT kit "authentic" of those worn on the field by the players retail for around \$180 from on-line stores like FansEdge and Azteca Soccer (neither have US Midwest physical stores). More affordable replica kits (fan versions) are available for approximately \$100 from Nike, DICK'S Sporting Goods, JD Sports, and SoccerPost.com. While cheaper "look-a-likes" can be found for \$50 or less on-line, quality and authorized trademarks can be an issue. Consider the purchase of a fan version as one would approach a Dale sweater for quality, durability, and long-term enjoyment on special occasions. Whether you wear it on matchday or throughout the week, the 2026 Norway Home Jersey delivers a standout clean look that stays true to the pride of the national team. There is also an all-black "away" version.

Factoid: Originating from British sports culture, a "kit" technically refers to the complete uniform a team wears or as the Brits say, the entire "kit and caboodle" of equipment from the jersey down to the shorts, socks, shin guards, and boots. Still, "kit" is commonly used interchangeably as the equivalent word for "jersey" just as in American sports.



District 5

Sons of Norway District 5 Convention 2026
 August 2-6, 2026, Stoughton, WI
 Sponsor Form
 Deadline: June 15



Booklet Ad Size	Price	#	Cost
Front inside, Back Inside, or Back outside Cover 5.5" x 8.5" with .125" bleed (circle preferred)	\$150		\$
Full Page Interior 5.25" x 8.25"	\$125		\$
Half Page : 5.25" x 4.125"	\$75		\$
Quarter Page (horizontal or vertical) 2.625" x 4.125"	\$35		\$
Well Wishes	\$2		\$
Total Ad			\$
Sponsorships	Price	#	Cost
All 4 levels includes signage to be displayed on the coffee table, recognition on the daily schedule and in the booklet			
MANGE TUSEN TAKK(many thousand thanks) Includes opportunity to speak to delegates and have signage in delegate hall	\$500+		\$
MANGE TAKK (MANY THANKS) Includes opportunity to have signage in delegate hall.	\$250		\$
PRESENTER/COFFEE BREAK	\$200		
TAKK (THANK YOU)	\$100		\$
Total Sponsorship		Total	\$

Name of Sponsor: _

Name of Contact:

Phone:

Email:

When mailing your check, please include a copy of this form. Make checks payable to:

SONS OF NORWAY – MANDT LODGE

Send to: Sons of Norway - Mandt Lodge Attn: Jane Conner, 317 S Page St, Stoughton, WI 53589

2026 Calendar

May 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026- Cultural Challenge

May 31- Submit Throwing Challenge Activities to Clara Solak

June 15- Extended Deadline for Convention Well-wishers, Ads, and Sponsorships

June 20- Viking Photo submissions due to LaVonne Wier

June 30- 2nd cycle deadline for D5 Nordic Legacy Foundation Cultural and Matching Grant applications

July 1- Convention registrations due and hotel room blocks end

July 12-25- Masse Moro

July 20- Viking Photo submissions due to LaVonne Wier

August 2-6- District 5 Convention in Stoughton

November 1- Lodge Liability Insurance due

December 31- Lodge Officer Updates (D63) due

Who to contact at the home office when you need help

- You can email cbs@sofn.com for any member updates that need to be made.
- **Foundation, Scholarships & Grants-** Amy Tuchenhagen
foundation@sofn.com, atuchenhagen@sofn.com, (612) 821-4655
- **Fraternal & Membership-** Connie O'Brien and Kirsten Lehman
fraternal@sofn.com, (612) 821-4643
- **Culture, Viking & Language:** Jana Velo
jvelo@sofn.com
- **Insurance Sales:**
SonsofNorwaySales@sofn.com, (833) 707-0012 – option 2
- For matter like submitting a death, a change to a members address or other info please email cbs@sofn.com
- For issues with passwords or website use ithelp@sofn.com.
- The 800 number to call in for member support is 800-945-8851

Note:

- Check correspondence from the International and District and the International (www.sofn.com) and District (www.sonsofnorway5.com) websites for any updates and changes.
- Additional deadlines for the District 5 Conventions/Lodge Meetings will be added as those dates are established. Watch for future mailings and the District 5 website.

Compiled by Darlene Arneson, SN District 5 Secretary (arnesonfamily5@gmail.com or 608-873-7209)

FFFN Basics

In an attempt to help our lodge leaders become more familiar with resources, changes, deadlines and other information, I will compile a weekly "Friendly Fifth Friday News" email to our leadership. Some of the information you might already have, but hopefully it will be a good reminder for all of us (me included) of all the great resources that Sons of Norway has to offer. **Please feel free to cut and paste any of this information for your lodge's use!**

Send all web posting info and calendar dates/events directly to our webmaster at inputd5@sonsofnorway5.com

With our new arrangement, I actually send the FFFN pdf to our webmaster on Thursday morning before I go to work. So if you have anything you'd like me to consider putting in, please send it by 4 am on Thursday morning. Please do not send

pdf's as I have a hard time cutting and pasting them. The Word Document works best for me. Don't forget that lodge events should be submitted to inputd5@sonsofnorway.com as I have a hard time keeping track of all lodge activities. I'll put some in but that is more the role of the website event calendar. If you would like to get the MS Word document, just shoot me an email and I'll add you to the list. I send it out right after I send the email to the large group.