

FAFO · GRASS-COURT INTELLIGENCE

Wimbledon 2026

Preview & Prediction

A grass-first read on history, tradition, and who is actually built to win — powered by the Success Projection Index (SPI /100).

Main draw 29 June – 12 July 2026

No. 1 seeds: Jannik Sinner & Aryna Sabalenka · Carlos Alcaraz out (wrist)



Five lenses on the same fortnight

01

History

From an 1877 garden-party experiment to the sport's most prestigious title.

02

The all-white code

A Victorian dress rule that became brand architecture — and finally bent in 2023.

03

Why grass is different

The surface removes time and rewrites the skill hierarchy.

04

The SPI model

An eight-factor index that scores fit-to-win, not reputation.

05

The 2026 call

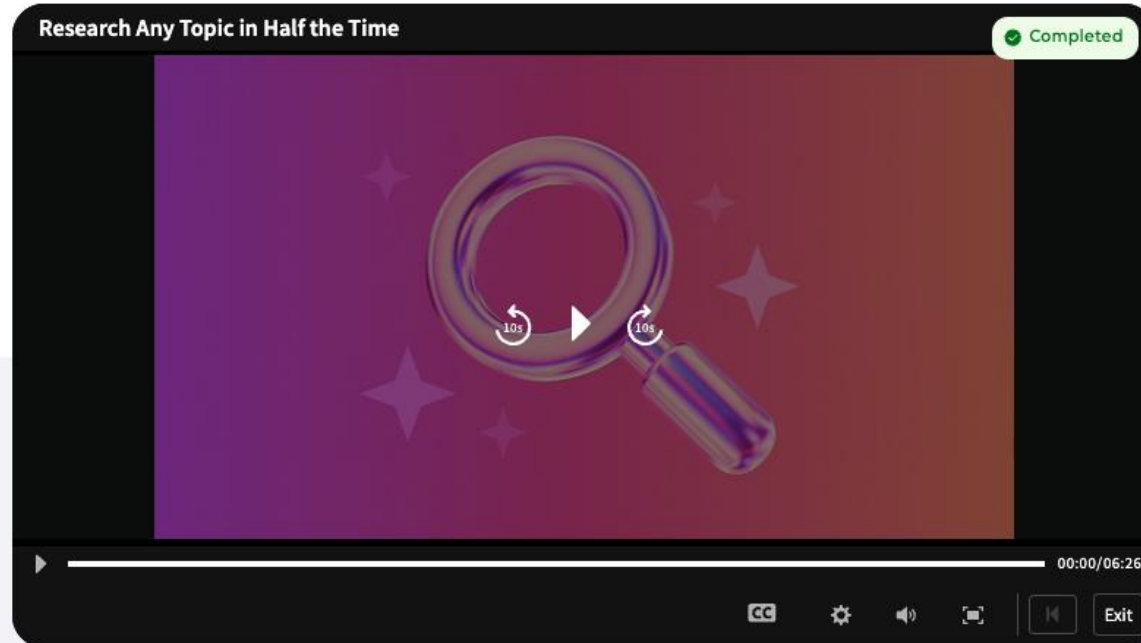
Applied SPI: men's and women's title tiers, with the honest read.

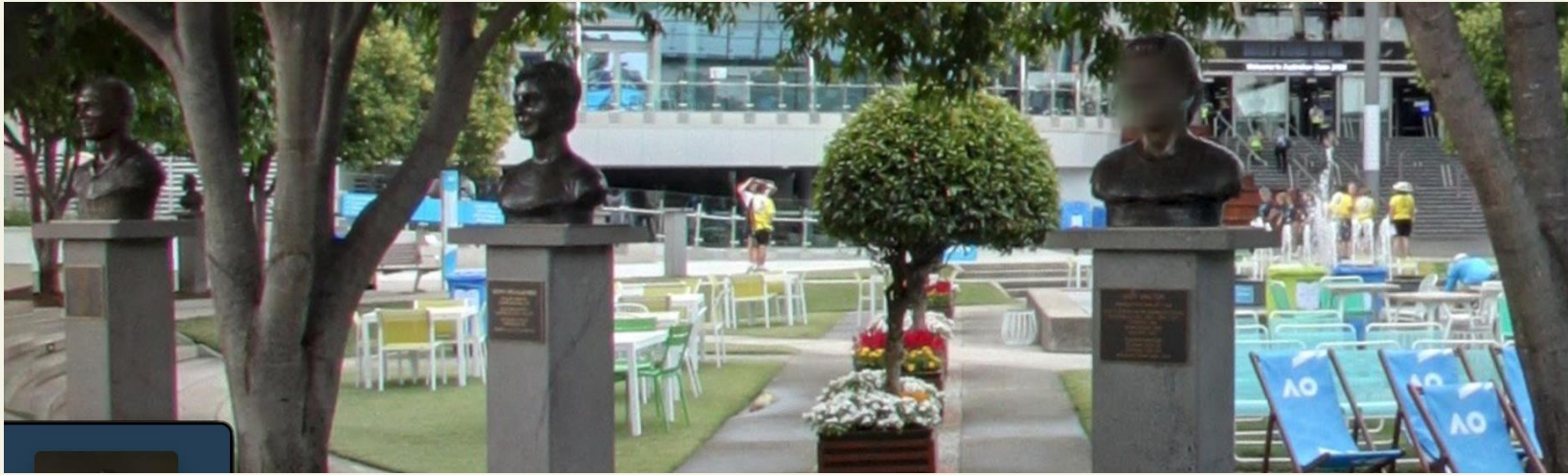


🕒 5 min

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RAFAEL JODAR



Sencillos

Dobles

Este Año

26

Ranking

-

Move

24 - 10

W-L

1

Títulos

\$1,554,184

Premio Económico

Carrera

23

Mejor Ránking (2026.06.08)

26 - 11

W-L

1

Títulos

\$1,894,783

Prize Money Singles & Doubles Combined

General

Biografía

Actividad

Estadísticas

Ranking



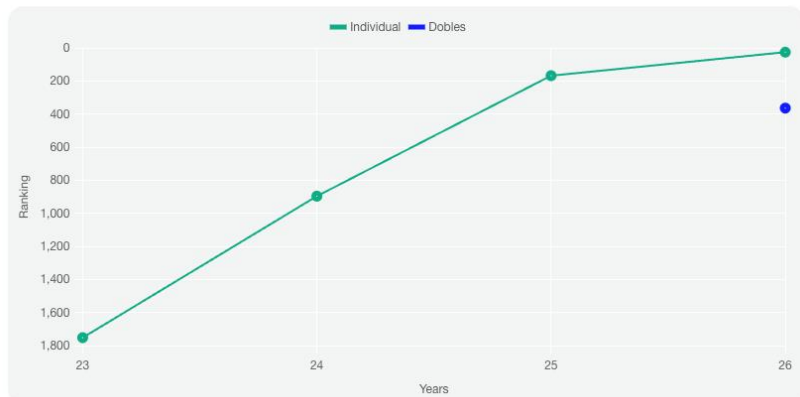
JUGADORES RAFAEL JODAR | Jugadores ▾

Ranking

Desglose de Ranking

PIF ATP RANKINGS

Carrera (Todos) ▾



ALEXANDER BUBLIK

Singles	Doubles				
YTD	11 Rank	- Move	20 - 14 W-L	1 Titles	\$1,243,784 Prize Money
Career	10 Career High Rank (2026.01.12)	209 - 186 W-L	9 Titles	\$12,178,822 Prize Money Singles & Doubles Combined	



Overview Bio Activity Stats Ranking



AMPLIAR EL JUEGO ES DOMINAR LA CIMA.

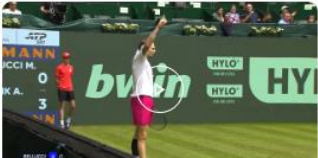


Personal details

Age	29 (1997/06/17)	Country	Kazakhstan 🇰🇿
Weight	180 lbs (82kg)	Birthplace	Gatchina, Russia
Height	6'5" (196cm)	Plays	Right-Handed, Two-Handed Backhand
Turned pro	2016	Coach	Artem Suprunov

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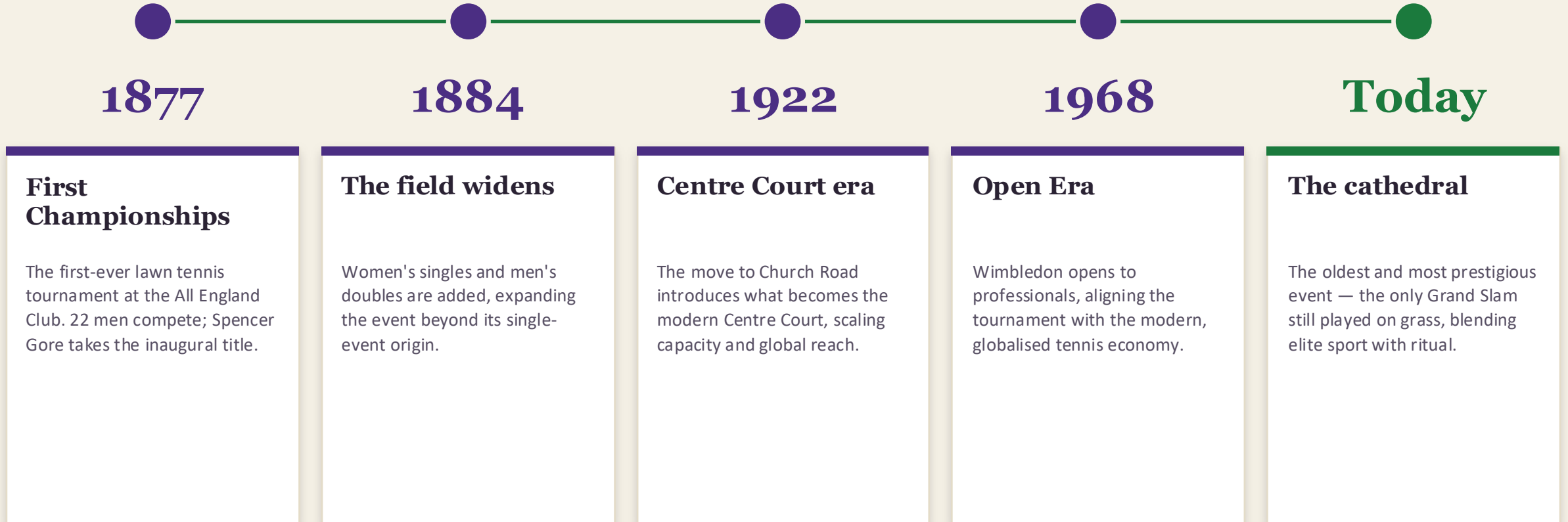
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5



Built in 1877, preserved on purpose



Play was suspended during both World Wars and again in 2020 (COVID) — a reminder of how tightly the event is tied to global context.

Who actually owns the lawn

Men's singles — most titles



Federer's eight is the men's record.

Women's singles — most titles



Navratilova's nine is the all-time record.

Reigning champions (2025): Men — Jannik Sinner · Women — Iga Świątek



THE RULE

Almost entirely white — shirts, shorts, trim, even accessories — with only minimal colour allowed.

TRADITION

The all-white policy

1

Victorian optics

White hid sweat and signalled cleanliness, control and upper-class discipline — social signalling baked into the sport.

2

Identity as a moat

As other Slams modernised, Wimbledon doubled down on restraint and ritual. The rule became its core visual trademark.

3

Brand control today

Instantly recognisable in one second, it limits sponsor clutter and player styling, keeping the focus on play.

When the white rule met modern athletes

Why critics call it exclusionary

Victorian-elite origins

White signalled wealth and class — a 19th-century worldview, not today's game.

Restricts self-expression

In an athlete-as-brand era, you stand out only through performance.

Real friction for women

Mandatory white underwear created genuine menstruation anxiety and mid-match stress.

Rigid enforcement

Players told to change kit mid-event; Federer pulled for orange soles; Agassi once boycotted.

The 2023 change

~150

years before the first
meaningful softening

Announced late 2022, implemented 2023: female players may now wear dark or mid-coloured undershorts — provided they don't extend beyond the outer kit and stay visually discreet.

A direct response to player pressure and menstrual anxiety — framed as removing a distraction so players can focus on tennis. The signal: Wimbledon adapts, but only under pressure and slowly.

Grass removes time from the player

The ball stays low and moves fast — compressing reaction time and forcing decisions almost immediately after the bounce.

01 Less time to react

Low friction; the ball skids and rallies shorten.

02 Lower bounce

Often below the knee — topspin fades, slice bites.

03 First-strike tennis

The fastest surface; points are short and decisive.

04 The serve is king

Skidding serves mean more aces, fewer breaks.

05 Unstable movement

Slippery and uneven — no sliding, small steps win.

06 Unpredictable bounce

Moisture, wear and heat punish pattern memory.

What grass rewards — and what it punishes

+ Grass rewards

- Big serve and a clean first strike
- Quick reactions and early ball-striking
- Finishing points at the net
- Flat, penetrating groundstrokes

— Grass punishes

- Heavy topspin grinding
- Defensive baseline play
- Long, patient rallies
- Slow, pattern-based construction

The sharper read: great grass-court players don't just hit better shots — they handle pressure and timing better than everyone else.

THE MODEL

The Success Projection Index

A score out of 100 that answers one question — is a player actually built to win Wimbledon 2026, or do they just look good on paper?

/100

Ranking is an input, not the answer

Grass has its own logic; the index punishes players whose reputation travels better than their footwork.

Balances six realities

Form, grass fit, Slam temperament, body condition, draw reality and career arc — not seedings alone.

Projection, not certainty

A model, deliberately conservative for qualifiers and wildcards unless their profile earns an upgrade.

Eight factors, weighted to 100



Why grass leads

Surface fit is the single biggest filter — ranking lies, grass reveals. Weighting it above form is what stops the SPI becoming a disguised ranking table.

Adjustments after the raw score:
injury penalties, draw penalties, grass-specialist bonuses and breakout bonuses fine-tune each total.

From title favourite to not viable

90–100	Clear title favourite	Everything lines up — form, grass fit, draw, fitness, Slam proof.
82–89	Major contender	A realistic champion if the draw opens or rivals wobble.
74–81	Second-week threat	Quarter/semi profile; a title needs a few breaks.
66–73	Dangerous but flawed	Can beat big names, unlikely to survive seven matches.
56–65	Upset-capable floater	Can wreck someone's draw, probably not win it.
45–55	Draw-dependent survivor	Needs generous opponents and rhythm fast.
30–44	Low-probability threat	Name or ranking overstates the real chance.
0–29	Symbolic / not viable	Needs chaos beyond normal tennis chaos.

Draw context: what shapes the call

29 Jun – 12 Jul

Main draw fortnight

The 2026 Championships run two weeks on grass.

**Sinner &
Sabalenka**

No. 1 seeds

Top of the men's and women's draws respectively.

Alcaraz: OUT

Wrist injury

Removes the player most able to bend the men's bracket.

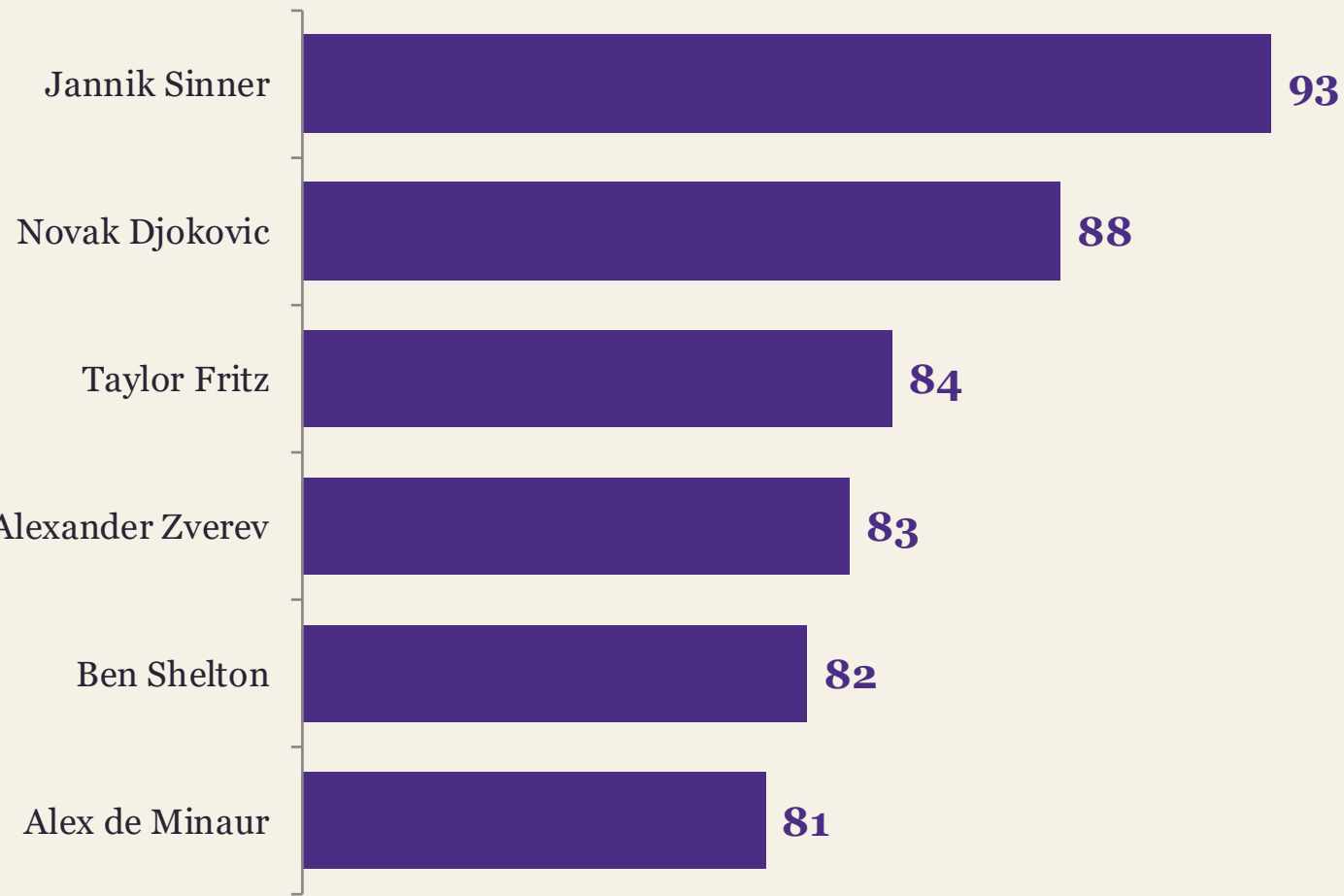
Men's field to watch

Sinner · Djokovic · Zverev · Auger-Aliassime · Shelton · De Minaur. Jack Draper returns from injury straight into Taylor Fritz.

Women's top group

Sabalenka · Rybakina · Świątek · Pegula · Andreeva · Anisimova · Gauff.
A deeper, more volatile field than the men's side.

Men's title tier — applied SPI



TOP SPI

93

Jannik Sinner

Sinner is the clean favourite — but not untouchable. Alcaraz's absence removes the bracket-bender; Djokovic still carries Wimbledon muscle memory.

Women's title tier — applied SPI



TOP SPI

89

Elena Rybakina

Rybakina's grass ceiling is the cleanest;
Sabalenka has the power profile;
Świątek carries champion gravity but
still has grass questions.

What the model is really saying

Men's draw

Sinner is the clean favourite

Alcaraz's wrist injury removes the one player most able to bend the bracket emotionally and tactically.

Credible routes behind him

Djokovic still has the Wimbledon muscle memory; Fritz, Shelton, De Minaur and Zverev all have paths if the early rounds get messy.

A typically mean draw

Jack Draper returns from injury straight into Taylor Fritz — exactly the kind of opener Wimbledon produces for sport.

Women's draw

More volatile than the men's

Rybakina's grass ceiling is the cleanest; Sabalenka brings the power profile; Świątek has champion gravity but lingering grass questions.

One afternoon from trouble

Andreeva and Gauff sit between obvious contender and one chaotic afternoon away from an early exit.

No nostalgia premium

Serena's return is a major narrative, but the model scores her as a dangerous symbolic threat — not a full tournament threat.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Tradition is the strategy

Wimbledon began as a small Victorian grass-court experiment in 1877 and became the sport's most prestigious title by holding onto tradition while the rest of tennis industrialised around it.

Grass is strategic, not cosmetic

It removes time and rewards serve, timing and first-strike clarity over endurance.

The white rule is brand architecture

Heritage doing heavy lifting for prestige — bending only slowly, under pressure.

SPI scores fit, not fame

Ranking is an input; the 2026 call rewards who is built to win, not who looks good on paper.

