

Brad Friedel Sports Talk Florida World Cup Exclusive: Colombia may surprise

Former U.S. Men's National Team goalkeeper Brad Friedel is offering early insight into some of the biggest storylines fans are already debating.

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-- Brad Friedel Sports Talk [World Cup](#)
Exclusive: Sullivan might have to wait
until 2030, Colombia could make waves
at 2026 World Cup

As excitement builds for the 2026 World Cup across the United States, Canada, and Mexico, former U.S. Men's National Team goalkeeper Brad Friedel is offering early insight into some of the biggest storylines fans are already debating.



Colombia could be a team to watch at the 2026 World Cup

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“I don't really see a major dark horse this tournament. You normally think of Spain, Germany, Brazil, Argentina... the usual big nations. Colombia could can play, and they will be used to the heat”

Brad Friedel

football's traditional power structure, Friedel is urging supporters to stay grounded while still allowing for a bit of imagination.

Too Soon for Cavan Sullivan in 2026

The rapid rise of 15-year-old midfielder Cavan Sullivan has sparked national conversation about how quickly he might break into the senior U.S. squad. Some fans have even floated the possibility of him being a late wildcard candidate for 2026, depending on how fast he develops. Friedel, however, believes that timeline is still unrealistic.

Asked whether Sullivan deserves to be part of the 2026 conversation, Friedel didn't hesitate. “Cavan Sullivan? It's too early for this World Cup,” Friedel, who spoke exclusively with [Sport Talk Media](#) for ToonieBet, said. “For the next one, he'll still be young, but that could be a real

possibility.”

Sullivan’s talent is undeniable. His poise, creativity, and ability to destabilize defenses have scouts across Europe watching closely. But Friedel’s comments reinforce that the pathway to the senior national team—especially on the sport’s biggest stage—still requires time, experience, and physical maturity. For now, 2030 appears to be the more realistic moment to envision Sullivan stepping into the global spotlight.

Searching for a True Dark Horse

The expanded 48-team tournament has raised questions about whether a nontraditional power might make a deep run. Friedel, though, isn’t convinced there is a genuine dark horse this time around.

“I don’t really see a major dark horse this tournament,” Friedel said. “You normally think of Spain, Germany, Brazil, Argentina... the usual big nations.”

One factor he believes could shape certain matches is the weather. The summer heat and humidity in several U.S. host cities may take a toll on some European sides, especially those unaccustomed to playing in such conditions.

Still, when pressed to identify one team outside Europe or South America’s dominant core, Friedel offered a name: Colombia.

“They’re good, they’ll be used to the heat, and they can play— but I don’t think they have quite enough to win it all.”

With the tournament inching closer, Friedel’s perspective brings both realism and intrigue. The favorites remain the favorites—but in a World Cup hosted across an entire continent, the unexpected is always waiting.

You can read more about this story and about the upcoming World Cup on Sports Talk Florida and the Sports Talk Media Network.

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