



## How Qatar created an exceptional night at the 2026 World Cup

### Description

*default watermark*

#### Qatar

The fifth minute of stoppage time in the match between Qatar and Switzerland was not just the moment Boualem Khoukhi scored the equaliser; it might have been the birth of a new chapter for the Qatari national team in the [World Cup](#).

The 1-1 draw gave "Al Annabi" their first point in the history of their World Cup participations, but the impact of this result goes far beyond the scoreline. The current tournament structure offers teams a path to qualification not only by finishing in the top two spots but also by competing as one of the best third-placed teams.

For long stretches, it appeared the Qatari team was headed toward another loss against a dominant Swiss side that controlled possession and threatened the Qatari goal with dozens of attempts. Yet, the match found a different hero.

Goalkeeper Mahmoud Abunada stood firm against the Swiss offensive surge, delivering one of the most remarkable individual performances of the tournament so far. By saving eight dangerous shots, he kept his team in the game until the very end. It was no surprise when he was named Man of the Match, making him the first Qatari player to achieve this honour in World Cup history.

### Qatar "a historic result

While Qatari fans celebrated the historic result, the European press was more focused on what they saw as a missed opportunity for Switzerland. Despite registering 26 shots on goal, the Swiss managed to score only once, leaving them with a draw that failed to reflect their dominance on the pitch.

However, football is rarely decided by statistics alone. While [Switzerland left the stadium](#) lamenting two dropped points, Qatar walked away with a single point that could prove invaluable as the tournament unfolds.

This result is particularly significant given the new 2026 World Cup format. Securing a point against one of the group's strongest competitors could prove decisive for qualification, whether the team advances via second place or as one of the top third-placed sides.

Beyond the complex math, the Qatari national team emerged from this encounter with three clear victories: their first-ever World Cup point, their first-ever Man of the Match recipient, and the proven ability to compete against opponents with vastly more World Cup experience.

Qatar's draw with Switzerland today may be viewed as a positive result, but only the coming days will determine whether this point is merely a footnote in the record books or the start of a journey toward Qatar's first-ever qualification for the World Cup knockout stages.

Featured image via Fran Santiago/Getty Images

By [Alaa Shamali](#)

default watermark

[Source link](#)

#### CATEGORY

1. News

#### POST TAG

1. 2026
2. created
3. cup
4. exceptional
5. how
6. news
7. night
8. qatar
9. the
10. world

#### Category

1. News