**2019 RUGBY WORLD CUP**

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The 2019 Rugby World Cup was the ninth edition of the Rugby World Cup, the quadrennial world championship for men's rugby union teams. It was hosted in ***JAPAN*** from 20 September to 2 November in 12 venues all across the country. The opening match was played at Ajinomoto Stadium in Chōfu, Tokyo, with the final match being held at International Stadium Yokohama in Yokohama. This was the first time that the tournament had taken place in Asia and outside the traditional Tier 1 rugby nations. The tournament saw the first cancellation of matches at the Rugby World Cup with Typhoon Hagibis affecting three matches due to the expected impact on safety that the typhoon would have.

South Africa beat England 32−12 in the final to claim their third title, equalling New Zealand's record. In doing so, South Africa became the first team to win the title after losing a match in the pool stage. The defending champions, New Zealand, finished third after defeating Wales in the bronze final.

The International Rugby Board (IRB) requested that any members wishing to host the 2015 Rugby World Cup and/or the 2019 event should indicate their interest by 15 August 2008, though no details had to be provided at that stage. A record 10 unions responded, with the 2019 tournament of interest to nine nations. Russia initially announced plans to bid for both events, but withdrew both in February 2009 in favour of what proved to be a successful bid for the 2013 Rugby World Cup Sevens. Australia withdrew from the bidding process on 6 May 2009. The IRB (which was renamed World Rugby in November 2014), RWC Ltd, the ***JAPAN*** Rugby Football Union (JRFU) and host organisers ***JAPAN*** 2019 went through a process of asking for expressions of interest and meeting with and explaining game hosting requirements to interested parties from late 2013. In May 2014, it was announced that 22 municipals and prefectural organisations across ***JAPAN*** had expressed interest.

Those organisations were asked to enter formal bids by 31 October 2014. On 5 November, organisers announced that 14 bids had been received. Hong Kong and Singapore had expressed interest in hosting some of the matches and were included in ***JAPAN***'s bid, but were not among the 14 stadiums announced in 2014. Nissan Stadium in Yokohama, venue for the 2002 FIFA World Cup Final and Niigata's Denka Big Swan Stadium, also a World Cup venue, decided not to bid.

The top three teams from the pools at the 2015 World Cup received an automatic spot, with the remaining eight teams coming from the qualifying series around the world. Six of the remaining eight spots available were filled by regional qualifiers with the additional two spots being filled in play-off. Qualifying was split into five regional groups; Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

TOP QUALIFYING TEAMS

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| *REGION* | *TEAM* |
| Africa | South Africa |
| Asia | Japan |
| Europe | England |
| Oceania | Australia |

