



UEFA
EUROPA
LEAGUE

Season review

2014/15





Contents

UEFA President’s message	2
Social responsibility	4

Technical report	6
Introduction	8
Destination Warsaw	10
The final: Sevilla do it again	18
The winning coach: Unai Emery	23
Technical topics	24
Possession	30
Passing	31
Goalscoring analysis	32
Best goals	34
Making the breakthrough	38
Hitting the target	39
Talking points	40
Discipline	43
All-star squad	44
Results and tables	46
Team profiles	50

Event report	66
Brand	68
Centralised marketing	70
Presenting sponsor: Western Union	72
Official partners: Hankook and HTC	74
Official supplier partner: adidas	75
Welcome to Warsaw	76
Broadcast network	78
Media rights	80
TV Production	82
The contenders	84
Communications	86
2015/16 season preview	88
Roll of honour	90

An absorbing journey

There was plenty to celebrate on the road to Warsaw, and not just for champions Sevilla

The 548th and final goal of the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League season, scored by Carlos Bacca, was a historic one. It confirmed Sevilla FC as champions for a record fourth time and it meant that the Spanish club successfully defended their trophy for the second time. Furthermore, their victory against first-time finalists FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk heralded the ninth occasion that a Spanish team have won the competition, matching the all-time record held by Italy.

Congratulations to the Andalusian side, who have contributed so much to the recent history of the UEFA Europa League (and the UEFA Cup previously) and who now, following a change in the regulations, will have the chance to perform in the UEFA Champions League from the group stage as a result of their triumph. We should also recognise the achievements of the beaten finalists from Ukraine, who performed admirably on their way to, and during, the Warsaw final.

Once again, that pathway to Poland perfectly illustrated how pan-European the reach of this great competition is. The four semi-finalists all progressed having appeared in the group stage of the UEFA Europa League, where the 48 competing clubs represented 26 different nations. There were many memorable matches and moments as we passed 3,000 goals in the history of the UEFA Europa League, and for many participating the campaign was unforgettable.

So well done to Sevilla, but also to all of the clubs that took part from the very first qualifying matches at the start of July 2014. There can only be one winner, but the experiences of supporters, players and staff have once again come together from all corners of Europe to make this competition so absorbing.

In this season review, we look back over the season and study the tactical trends and talking points in the technical report, recognising that football is an ever-evolving sport. This is accompanied by the event report, which reviews the marketing, broadcasting and organisational aspects that all dovetailed to contribute to a successful season. We hope you enjoy it.

Michel Platini
UEFA President



UEFA President Michel Platini congratulates Sevilla club captain Fernando Navarro

“ Once again, the pathway to Poland perfectly illustrated how pan-European the reach of this great competition is ”



Carlos Bacca fires in Sevilla's Warsaw winner



Sevilla's name is engraved on the trophy for a fourth time

Making a difference

The launch of the UEFA Foundation for Children and the appointment of Clarence Seedorf as global ambassador for diversity and change were important milestones in 2014/15

The final of the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League in Warsaw gave a powerful illustration of the difference sport can make to people's lives and how it can be used to promote positive messages across society.

The UEFA Foundation for Children – inaugurated in May 2015 – gave more than 100 youngsters in total the chance to attend the two major club finals, including the final of the UEFA Champions League in Berlin. Chaired by former European Commission president José Manuel Durão Barroso, the charity will provide support primarily in the areas of health, education, access to sport, personal development, integration and the defence of the rights of the child. Initial projects embrace the provision for making an impact beyond Europe's borders, including support of the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan and the Just Play programme in the Pacific Islands.

"Since the dawn of time, children have always symbolised the future of humanity, but childhood is one of the periods in life when we are at our most fragile and vulnerable," said the UEFA President, Michel Platini. "Paradoxically, it is also the time when we exhibit the most extraordinary potential. The foundation seeks to nurture, protect and foster that potential."

UEFA's dedication to education on matters of diversity was also underlined during the season by the appointment of four-time UEFA Champions League winner Clarence Seedorf as global ambassador for diversity and change. "I am really honoured to be part of this whole project," said the former Netherlands international at his unveiling in Amsterdam in December 2014.

"After I spoke with the [UEFA] President, I felt his passion, and his ideas were very convincing. The leadership that UEFA is showing says a lot about where we want to go, and I am sure that together we can gather enough people to create a great and positive movement."

UEFA's No to Racism message was amplified most in the competition during matchday three, as part of the FARE network Football People action weeks. As well as the on-pitch messaging, an estimated audience in excess of 180 million were exposed to the television spot, in which the competition's most popular players joined forces to add support.

UEFA's Respect Your Health campaign underpinned the no-smoking policy at the UEFA Europa League final, while the Access for All project – in partnership with CAFE (Centre for Access to Football in Europe) – ensured access to the National Stadium Warsaw for disabled supporters. Games on the Castle Square fan zone mini-pitch, meanwhile, showcased Special Olympics and amputee teams, highlighting UEFA's commitment to making football open to everyone.

Inclusivity was a theme throughout the season. UEFA held the Respect Diversity conference in Rome in September 2014 to focus on using football as a vehicle for change. Over 200 delegates attended to hear and discuss examples of good practice and to exchange experiences. The innovative Captains of Change programme and the pioneering Women in Football Leadership Programme both actively seek to develop equality in the sport.

“ Childhood is when we exhibit the most extraordinary potential. The UEFA Foundation for Children seeks to nurture, protect and foster that potential ”



Clockwise from top: Children spread the No to Racism message during the FARE action weeks; UEFA ambassador Clarence Seedorf; the UEFA Foundation for Children invited youngsters to the final and provides support for the Just Play programme and the Za'atari refugee camp in Jordan



Technical report



Introduction

Coaching insight

UEFA's technical observers met after the final to draw their conclusions from a thought-provoking campaign

This review of the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League season offers a record of a campaign that spanned 205 matches from the start of the group stage in September to the final at the National Stadium Warsaw on 27 May.

It is a report providing useful factual and statistical information on the sixth season of the UEFA Europa League but which, moreover, seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the action on the field through the analysis and interpretations of UEFA's technical observers.

A small group of coaches gave their input on every match played from the round of 16 onwards, providing a platform on which UEFA's whole technical observers' group could build their discussions when they met in Warsaw on the morning after the final between FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk and Sevilla FC.

Ioan Lupescu, UEFA's chief technical officer, chaired this review panel as they reflected on the tactical approaches and trends witnessed, and there was fascinating insight from some impressive coaching figures. Sir Alex Ferguson drew on his vast knowledge and experience of European club competition, while Lars Lagerbäck brought the perspective of a long-serving international coach with Sweden and now Iceland.

They were joined by Dušan Fitzel, Stefan Majewski, Willi Rutensteiner, Ghenadie Scurtul and László Szalai – technical directors of the Czech, Polish, Austrian, Moldovan and Hungarian national associations respectively – along with former Slovakia international Dušan Tittel.

The end product is a report that is designed to provide coaches across the continent with food for thought and fuel for further debate. It will be made available to members of the coaching family throughout Europe and will keep development coaches abreast of the evolving styles and approaches at the elite end of the club game.



Ruslan Rotan and José Antonio Reyes compete for the ball in Warsaw



The UEFA technical observers' group in Warsaw (from left to right): Dušan Fitzel, Stefan Majewski, Lars Lagerbäck, László Szalai, Ioan Lupescu, Sir Alex Ferguson, Willi Rutensteiner, Ghenadie Scurtul, Dušan Tittel and Frank Ludolph

Group A



FC Zürich
(ZUR)



VfL Borussia
Mönchengladbach
(MGB)



Villarreal CF
(VIL)



Apollon
Limassol FC
(APL)

Group B



HJK Helsinki
(HJK)



Club Brugge
KV
(BRU)



Torino FC
(TOR)



FC
København
(KOB)

Group C



Asteras
Tripolis FC
(AT)



FK Partizan
(PAR)



Tottenham
Hotspur FC
(TOT)



Beşiktaş JK
(BES)

Group D



FC Dinamo
Moskva
(DMO)



PSV Eindhoven
(PSV)



Estoril Praia
(EST)



Panathinaikos
FC
(PAN)

Group E



Feyenoord
(FEY)



R. Standard
de Liège
(STA)



HNK Rijeka
(RJK)



Sevilla FC
(SEV)

Group F



AC Sparta
Praha
(SPP)



BSC Young Boys
(YB)



ŠK Slovan
Bratislava
(SLO)



SSC Napoli
(NAP)

Group G



EA Guingamp
(GUI)



PAOK FC
(PAOK)



FC Dinamo
Minsk
(DMI)



ACF Fiorentina
(FIO)

Group H



AFC Ajax
(AJX)



RSC Anderlecht
(AND)



Athletic Club
(ATH)



Liverpool FC
(LIV)

Group I



HJK Helsinki
(HJK)



Club Brugge
KV
(BRU)



Torino FC
(TOR)



FC
København
(KOB)

Group J



FC Astra
Giurgiu
(AST)



FC Salzburg
(SAL)



Celtic FC
(CEL)



GNK Dinamo
Zagreb
(DZG)

Group K



AS Saint-
Étienne
(SET)



FC Dnipro
Dnipropetrovsk
(DNI)



FC Internazionale
Milano
(INT)



Qarabağ FK
(QAR)

Group L



VfL Wolfsburg
(WOL)



LOSC Lille
(LIL)



FC Krasnodar
(KRA)



Everton FC
(EVE)

Group M



FC Dynamo
Kyiv
(DKV)



FC Steaua
București
(STE)



Aalborg BK
(AAB)



Rio Ave FC
(RIO)


Group N



KSC Lokeren
OV
(LOK)



FC Metalist
Kharkiv
(MET)



Trabzonspor
AŞ
(TRA)



Legia Warszawa
(LEG)

Clubs joined from the UEFA Champions League



AFC Ajax
(AJX)



RSC Anderlecht
(AND)



Athletic Club
(ATH)



Liverpool FC
(LIV)



Olympiacos FC
(OLY)



AS Roma
(ROM)



Sporting Clube
de Portugal
(SPO)



FC Zenit
(ZEN)

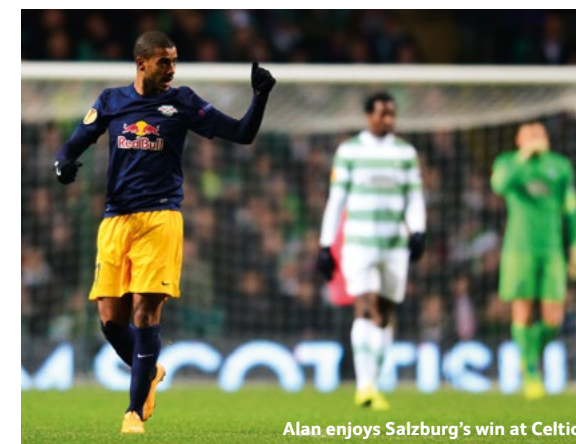
The abbreviations above are used in place of club names on pages 50–65

Competition overview

Destination Warsaw

While Dnipro highlighted the unpredictable nature of the UEFA Europa League, holders Sevilla's experience told in the end

Grzegorz Krychowiak celebrates scoring the first goal of Sevilla's campaign, at home to Feyenoord on matchday one



Alan enjoys Salzburg's win at Celtic



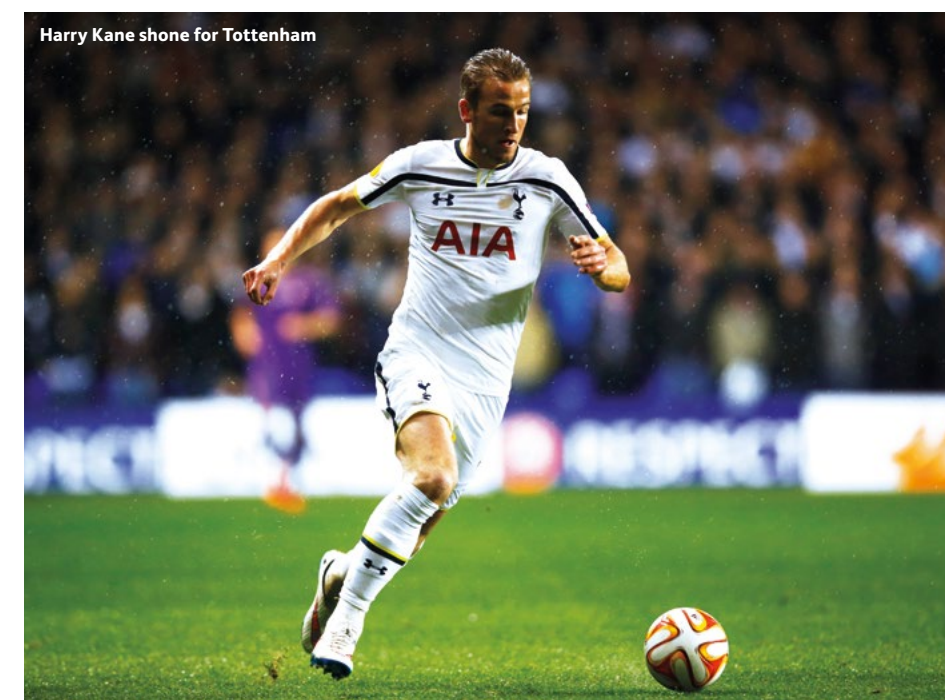
Inter's Juan Pablo Carrizo keeps St-Étienne at bay



Idrissa Gueye (Lille) and Ari (Krasnodar)



Mönchengladbach fans followed their team in huge numbers



Harry Kane shone for Tottenham

Group stage

As the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League group stage unfolded, few people could have imagined that FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk – a team who failed to score in their first three matches – would end up advancing all the way to the final to face Sevilla FC. But therein lies the appeal of a competition that pits some of the continent's most famous football names against lesser-known, up-and-coming opposition – often with unexpected consequences.

The 2014/15 UEFA Europa League group stage began in September with 48 sides from 26 different countries – and the 14 clubs new to the group stage underlined the tournament's impressive breadth and diversity. There were teams with a rich heritage – former European champions Feyenoord and European finalists AS Saint-Étienne and Torino FC – alongside clubs enjoying their first continental campaigns, such as Russia's FK Krasnodar and Rio Ave FC of Portugal.

The most impressive performance by a group stage debutant was by Dinamo Moskva, who won all six games in Group E

The most impressive performance by a group stage debutant was by FC Dinamo Moskva, who won all six games in Group E to finish above a PSV Eindhoven side who have appeared in every season of the UEFA Europa League.

While Dinamo alone took maximum points, five other teams – VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach, Club Brugge KV, Beşiktaş JK, FC Salzburg and FC Internazionale Milano – ended the group stage unbeaten too. In Salzburg's case they did so in free-scoring fashion, hitting an unsurpassed 21 goals, eight of them by Alan. The Brazilian did not actually play again in the UEFA Europa League after his mid-winter move to China, but would still emerge as this season's joint top

scorer. Curiously, of the four clubs who went furthest in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League, only SSC Napoli actually topped their group. Sevilla came second to Feyenoord, while Dnipro just managed to scrape through. They entered their final game bottom of Group F, only to jump two places and deny newcomers Qarabağ FK a historic qualification, the Azerbaijani club having earlier won at Dnipro – their country's first victory in a European group stage fixture. But Dnipro were not the only ones to bounce back – Denmark's Aalborg BK suffered a competition record 6-0 drubbing by FC Steaua București in their first match, yet finished above the Romanian side in the final group standings.

Competition overview

Round of 32

Seventeen countries were still represented when the knockout stage began in February – and none more so than Italy, with a record five teams, all of which continued to prosper. FC Internazionale Milano got the better of Celtic FC in a rematch of the 1967 European Champion Clubs' Cup final, prevailing 1-0 at home after a 3-3 first-leg draw in Glasgow that featured a wonderfully worked team goal by Celtic's Stuart Armstrong.

Of the other Serie A contenders, ACF Fiorentina and AS Roma overcame the respective challenges of Tottenham Hotspur FC and Feyenoord, while Napoli extended their run of clean sheets to five matches by ousting Trabzonspor AŞ. As for a Torino outfit back in Europe after a 20-year absence, they produced one of the outstanding results of the round by becoming the first Italian side

to win at Athletic Club – their 3-2 victory took them through 5-4 on aggregate.

Liverpool FC, like Athletic, were one of five teams that had only a brief stay in the competition after joining from the UEFA Champions League. Ten years after clinching that trophy in a penalty shoot-out at the Atatürk Olimpiyat Stadium, the Reds returned to the same venue and, in front of a 63,324 crowd, went down 5-4 on penalties to Beşiktaş. Dejan Lovren missed the decisive kick, though the highlight was the superb Tolgay Arslan strike that levelled the aggregate score at 1-1.

The three other new arrivals to slip up included RSC Anderlecht, unable to deny Dinamo Moskva a first last-16 appearance in a major UEFA competition in 19 years. Elsewhere, Sporting

Clube de Portugal's 20th unbeaten home match in the competition could not save them against VfL Wolfsburg, and Olympiacos FC were eliminated 4-2 on aggregate by a Dnipro side now gathering momentum.

Zenit would be the sole club from the UEFA Champions League to go far in the tournament, and they kicked off with a 4-0 aggregate success against PSV. AFC Ajax, for their part, ended Legia Warszawa's dream of reaching the final on home soil with an equally comprehensive triumph. Ironically, it was Polish forward Arkadiusz Milik who shattered his compatriots' hopes with three of the four Ajax goals.

One of the season's most impressive campaigners were Club Brugge, who had come through two qualifying ties prior to the group stage and now stretched their unbeaten sequence to 12 matches with a 6-1 dismantling of AaB over two legs. As for the eventual champions, Sevilla began to find their stride, building on a 1-0 home victory over Mönchengladbach with a 3-2 away success – their first on the road in 2014/15.

Their Liga colleagues (and next opponents) Villarreal CF won home and away too – against a Salzburg side missing the departed Alan. For the man who would finish level with him on eight goals, Romelu Lukaku, the round of 32 was especially productive: the Belgian notched five goals over two legs as Everton FC overpowered BSC Young Boys. Lukaku's finishing prowess raised Evertonian ambitions, but the English club had a warning of what lay around the corner when FC Dynamo Kyiv overturned a 2-1 first-leg deficit to bring to a close EA Guingamp's longest ever run in Europe.



Fiorentina won their local tussle with Roma



Dnipro needed extra-time to see off Ajax



Alex Witsel salutes the fans after Zenit's win against Torino



Dynamo's Andriy Yarmolenko holds off Everton's Gareth Barry

Inter got the better of Celtic in a rematch of the 1967 European Cup final, despite Stuart Armstrong's wonderfully worked team goal



Xherdan Shaqiri fires at the Celtic goal



Guingamp's adventure captured the imagination



Demba Ba celebrates following Beşiktaş' shoot-out win against Liverpool



Everton goalkeeper Tim Howard

Round of 16

Dynamo's powers of recovery came to the fore in the way they responded to losing their lead in a 2-1 first-leg defeat at Everton confirmed by Lukaku's late penalty. In front of a competition record crowd of 67,553 at the NSK Olimpiyskiy, though, Serhiy Rebrov's men hit back with an emphatic 5-2 scoreline, Andriy Yarmolenko and Antunes both delivering eye-catching long-range strikes.

For their fellow Ukrainians Dnipro, a single goal – from Roman Zozulya – was enough to secure a home victory against Ajax in front of a considerably smaller attendance of 10,581 at the same Kyiv venue. Having to play all their home games 450km from Dnipropetrovsk because of the political situation in Ukraine proved no hindrance, and nor did that narrow first-leg advantage, as in Amsterdam Dnipro squeezed through on away goals thanks to Yevhen Konoplyanka's extra-time effort in a 2-1 reverse.

Sevilla's own advance had echoes of the previous season when they negotiated knockout ties against

two domestic rivals; this time it was Villarreal standing in their path, but Unai Emery's charges made the perfect start in the first leg at El Madrigal, with Vitolo registering after just 13.21 seconds – the quickest strike in UEFA Europa League history. It was the springboard for Sevilla to claim a 3-1 first-leg cushion, on which they embellished with a 2-1 success back in Andalusia.

Club Brugge had not contested a European quarter-final for 20 years, yet they showed the quality and strength of character needed to reach the last eight by coming from behind in both legs of their 5-2 aggregate triumph over Beşiktaş. Big striker Tom De Sutter scored in each match, with his equaliser in front of 65,110 in the second leg followed by a double from substitute Boli Bolingoli-Mbombo.

There was the same aggregate score between Wolfsburg and Inter, with the German side proceeding to their first European quarter-final in considerable style. Kevin De Bruyne took his goal

tally to five with a double in Wolfsburg's 3-1 home victory and Inter were beaten again back at San Siro, despite a fine Rodrigo Palacio strike.

Two other Serie A teams bowed out in the last 16, as Torino fell 2-1 on aggregate to Zenit – despite a spirited second-leg response to their 2-0 loss in Russia – and Fiorentina won an all-Italian contest with Roma. Seydou Keita's equaliser in the Florence first leg looked to have given the Giallorossi the edge, but Fiorentina plundered three goals in the opening 22 minutes at the Stadio Olimpico to guarantee their passage – and extend their unbeaten away record in the tournament to ten games. They would be joined in the last eight by Napoli, who halted a hitherto undefeated Dinamo Moskva courtesy of a Gonzalo Higuain hat-trick in Naples.

Competition overview

Quarter-finals

For Sevilla, their European know-how and strength in depth were telling ingredients in a hard-fought quarter-final conquest of Zenit. Emery's men trailed in the first leg at the Estadio Ramón Sánchez Pizjuán until the 73rd minute, when substitute Carlos Bacca equalised. Fellow replacement Denis Suárez then sealed the turnaround with a brilliant 88th-minute volley. Back in St Petersburg, Sevilla had to survive a storm of pressure after Hulk's ferocious shot had made it 2-1 on the night, but a late equaliser on the counter by Kevin Gameiro – another substitute and scorer of the winning penalty in the 2014 final – saw them through. It was a case of fine margins in Kyiv too where Dnipro, having held Club Brugge 0-0

in Belgium, advanced to their first European semi-final thanks to Yevhen Shakhov's deflected strike eight minutes from the end. Dynamo Kyiv's attempt to accompany Dnipro into the last four foundered against Fiorentina. The Viola grabbed an added-time equaliser in Kyiv through Khouma Babacar, then prevailed 2-0 in Italy where Dynamo had Jeremain Lens dismissed with the game goalless. There was no such second-leg drama between Napoli and Wolfsburg, the Italians having effectively wrapped up progress when a superb team performance earned them a 4-1 first-leg victory in Germany on coach Rafael Benítez's birthday.



Competition overview



Semi-finals

Napoli, playing their first continental semi-final since the Diego Maradona-inspired UEFA Cup triumph of 1989, were strong favourites against Dnipro and they dominated the first leg. They had 16 goal attempts to their visitors' three. Yet the final score in Naples read 1-1 after Yevhen Seleznyov cancelled out David López's opener and goalkeeper Denys Boyko denied Higuaín twice in one-on-ones. Back at a rain-soaked NSK Olimpiyskyi, Boyko foiled Higuaín once more before Seleznyov headed the goal that brought a final chapter in Warsaw to Dnipro's tale of the unexpected. Their opponents would be Sevilla, whose 5-0 aggregate dispatching of Fiorentina might have been less straightforward had the Viola snapped up the early chances that fell to Mario Gomez, Matías Fernández and Mohamed Salah in the first match. Fiorentina had been guilty of profligacy in previous outings and they paid the price now as Sevilla's attack-minded full-back Aleix Vidal took over, firing in two goals and setting up a third for Gameiro. That left the Andalusians with one foot firmly in the final, and back in Florence they took the definitive step as Bacca and Daniel Carriço hit early goals and Josip Iličić missed a penalty to leave Vincenzo Montella bemoaning his Fiorentina side's "0%" efficiency.

Clockwise from top: a packed Estadio Ramón Sánchez Pizjuán awaits kick off; Sevilla's Aleix Vidal; Fiorentina forward Mohamed Salah; Sevilla are back in the final



Clockwise from top: Douglas and Raúl Albiol clash in Ukraine; Dnipro coach Myron Markevych; Dnipro celebrate a famous win



The final

Sevilla do it again

Dnipro gave Sevilla a scare, but the holders' positive approach eventually made the difference

It was the morning after the night before and Sir Alex Ferguson – a man synonymous with attractive, attacking football – offered a glowing appraisal of the 2015 UEFA Europa League final. “Both teams had a great spirit for the game,” he said. “They wanted to get the ball forward and be positive and that was great to see.” With those words we had the essence of a captivating contest at the National Stadium Warsaw.

This was a final in which both teams made history, and it was rich in intrigue even before a ball had been kicked – a collision of two clubs with different but equally compelling, stories on the banks of the river Vistula. Sevilla FC, the defending champions and UEFA Cup winners in 2006 and 2007, were looking to take the trophy for a record fourth time. Underdogs FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk, the team from war-torn Ukraine, had upset the odds simply by reaching their first European final.

The fact they had done so by scoring just half of Sevilla's 26 goals en route to Warsaw – Dnipro's tally was 13 from 14 games (play-offs excluded) – pointed to a fascinating clash of styles too. For László Szalai, a member of UEFA's technical observers' group, this meant Sevilla's “very modern” approach – an attacking game plan with talented individuals – against the “very compact and conservative style” of Dnipro, with its echoes of the old Soviet school.

Yet in a first half with more twists than a 1960s dance hall, Dnipro gave us an early surprise. The Sevilla fans had barely packed away their giant banner of *El Abuelito* – the cartoon grandfather who is a popular symbol of the Andalusian club's supporters – holding the UEFA Europa League trophy when they were silenced by Myron Markevych's outsiders.

The atmosphere builds prior to kick-off in Warsaw



Two goals from Carlos Bacca made the difference for Sevilla

Dnipro 2-3 Sevilla

Wednesday 27 May 2015
National Stadium Warsaw

Goals

1-0 Kalinić 7, 1-1 Krychowiak 28, 1-2 Bacca 31,
2-2 Rotan 44, 2-3 Bacca 73

Lineups

Dnipro Boyko; Fedetskiy, Douglas, Cheberyachko, Léo Matos; Kankava (Shakhov 85), Fedorchuk (Bezus 68); Matheus, Rotan (C), Konoplyanka; Kalinić (Seleznyov 78)

Sevilla Rico; Aleix Vidal, Daniel Carriço, Kolodziejczak, Trémoulinas; Mbia, Krychowiak; Reyes (C) (Coke 58), Banega (Iborra 89), Vitolo; Bacca (Gameiro 82)

Yellow cards

Dnipro Kankava 17, Kalinić 45+2, Bezus 70, Rotan 75, Léo Matos 83

Sevilla Krychowiak 45+2, Daniel Carriço 62, Bacca 74

Referee Martin Atkinson (England)

Attendance 45,000

Throughout their run to the final, Dnipro had used the long ball as an effective tool and it was the source of a superbly worked goal in the seventh minute. Collecting the ball from his goalkeeper, defender Artem Fedetskiy launched it down the line to Nikola Kalinić who, outjumping Timothée Kolodziejczak, nodded it on to Matheus, racing down the right. Matheus had spun in behind Sevilla left-back Benoît Trémoulinas in anticipation of Kalinić's flick and, running into the box, he sent a brilliant first-time cross back for the Croatian to head beyond Sergio Rico. It was the first time Sevilla had trailed in any of their four UEFA Cup and UEFA Europa League finals, yet there was no sense of panic from the experienced, assured Andalusians. As Dnipro sat back on their lead, Sevilla set about getting back into the match.

One obvious route was down the flanks, and it was no surprise when a Trémoulinas cross created their first opening – a strike from Vitolo blocked by a blue shirt. “I am really impressed with how Sevilla used their full-backs going forward,” said Lars Lagerbäck afterwards. “They cooperate so well to try to find surprises and it is difficult to defend against them.”

Yet Sevilla's varied attacking approach ensured Dnipro had other worries. The Blanquirrojos were impressively balanced, with the wily Reyes and pacy Vitolo coming in from the flanks to support Bacca, and Éver Banega pulling the strings behind. The eventual man of the match, Banega was always eager to get on the ball and rarely misplaced a pass, and he had a telling role in the equalising goal.

It was his quickly taken free-kick that set up Reyes for a shot that was deflected behind. From Banega's ensuing short corner, Reyes and Vitolo worked the ball back to the Argentinian who curled an inswinging cross into the Dnipro box. Bacca, his back to goal, laid the ball off to Grzegorz Krychowiak and the midfielder took one touch with his left foot to move the ball away from Léo Matos and then shot low with his right, through the legs of Yevhen Cheberychko

and past the unsighted Denys Boyko, who got a hand to the ball in vain. Krychowiak had become the first Polish player since the watching Zbigniew Boniek to score in a European final.

The Sevilla fans were bobbing in a sea of red and white at the opposite end of the pitch and they soon had another goal to celebrate. Although Sevilla would complete twice as many passes over the 90 minutes, they were not all short passes; the post-match statistic that they attempted 40 long passes to Dnipro's 46 was evidence that the Spanish side were not afraid to get the ball forward quickly, and we saw this in the creation of their second goal.

It followed impressively swift and incisive action by Reyes – a man playing in his third UEFA Europa League final. There seemed no immediate danger as the 31-year-old received the ball 5m inside Dnipro territory, yet he turned away from his marker and dissected the two Dnipro centre-backs with a laser-precision pass that met Bacca's perfectly timed run across Douglas and into the space behind. Around Boyko he went and in a flash the ball was speeding past the lunging Douglas and into the net. Inside four minutes, Sevilla had turned the final on its head.

One specific problem Dnipro faced was that Sevilla were paying special attention to their main source of inspiration. As Dušan Fitzel said: “They were ready for Konoplyanka. They double-marked him.” He may have delivered a brilliant left-foot cross for Dnipro's semi-final winner but Konoplyanka was particularly menacing when moving inside on to his right – hence Sevilla's

efforts to keep him out wide. With the Spaniards' tireless right-back, Aleix Vidal, bombing up the same flank, Konoplyanka had defensive concerns too, yet his quality still shone through.

After 37 minutes, following a foul on the Dnipro No10 by Vitolo, he collected a short free-kick from captain Ruslan Rotan and unleashed a brilliant right-foot strike, matched only by the excellence of Sevilla goalkeeper Sergio Rico, who read the rise and curl of the ball and flipped out a hand to tip it over the crossbar.

Rico had no answer, though, when another dead-ball opportunity arose for Dnipro a minute before the break. Sevilla were seeking to counter the Ukrainians' long-ball threat by getting a second man in front of Kalinić, but this time the striker won the header and Matheus was bundled to the ground as he scrapped for the second ball. Referee Martin Atkinson signalled a free-kick and Rotan did the rest. He took a single-step run-up and clipped the ball over the defensive wall and past the outstretched arm of Rico as the goalkeeper scrambled across his goal.

It had been a breathless first half – the highest-scoring in the final of the competition since 2001 – and it was no surprise to see the ball back in both penalty boxes as the second period began. Bacca, again moving along the line of the last defender, was a fraction offside from a Reyes through pass. Then, Konoplyanka, drifting across the pitch, angled a ball to the far post where Léo Matos just failed to connect cleanly.

The eventual man of the match, Banega was always eager to get on the ball and rarely misplaced a pass



Match statistics		
Dnipro		Sevilla
42%	Possession	58%
12	Total attempts	18
5	Attempts on target	5
5	Corners	11
256	Passes	444
188	Passes completed	378

Clockwise from top left: Léo Matos steals a march on José Antonio Reyes; Éver Banega keeps Jaba Kankava at full stretch; Ruslan Rotan's free-kick makes it 2-2



Sergio Rico keeps a Dnipro attack at bay



Nikola Kalinić opens the scoring

Of particular interest was the notable shift in Dnipro's approach. They pressed higher up the pitch for the first 15 minutes after the restart – a play that had proved successful in previous rounds. Yet though the statistics showed their second-half possession was greater (45% to 39% in the first 45 minutes), they could only sustain this for so long against Sevilla, who responded with the night's first substitution after 58 minutes. Emery moved Vidal higher up the pitch in place of the withdrawn Reyes, and substitute Coke, a more defensive-minded full-back, provided extra security against the threat of Konoplyanka.

With Kalinić struggling after a kick by the yellow-carded Daniel Carriço, Sevilla began to turn the screw. In the 64th minute Stéphane Mbia

leapt unmarked to meet a Banega corner, but his header flew over. Kolodziejczak flicked on from another Banega corner and when Boyko got a hand to the ball ahead of Mbia, it fell to Krychowiak whose shot was blocked by Léo Matos.

The pressure was building and with 17 minutes remaining, Dnipro cracked. Léo Matos hoofed a clearance high into the night sky and when the ball eventually came down into the D of the penalty box, Douglas, the big Brazilian, collided with Rotan as he dived in, heading only partially away. Jaba Kankava had a chance to clear but sought a second touch and Vitolo pounced, prodding the ball to Bacca. The Sevilla striker was suddenly in behind the blue line and with a flash of his left boot the ball flew beyond Boyko.

Bacca celebrated with his shoulders draped in a Colombian flag flung from the crowd. As for Kankava – hitherto a picture of socks-down industry, screening his back four – he dropped to the turf with head in hands. It felt like the pivotal moment and although Fedetskiy scuffed a shot wide soon after, Bacca could have ended any doubt in the 79th minute. Mbia's cross gave him his hat-trick chance but Boyko threw up an arm to deflect his header over the bar.



Dnipro had made history simply by reaching Warsaw, but it was Sevilla, raising the trophy for a fourth time, in the record books



Sevilla savour their victory

The drama was not quite over. A hush descended on the stadium when, off the ball, Mateus dropped to the ground. He had received a blow to the nose moments before and departed on a stretcher, meaning Dnipro would play the final minutes with ten men. Thanks to Konoplyanka's ability to find space in the tightest of spots, they were still able to force the first of a series of late corners, but even then the last clear opening fell to Sevilla. Vidal, ambitious to the last, pulled the ball back for Coke who shot over. It made no difference: the trophy was heading back to southern Spain.

Bacca, who once worked as a bus conductor in Colombia while playing part-time football, had driven Sevilla to victory and now he wept tears of joy. Dnipro had made history simply by reaching Warsaw but it was Sevilla, raising the trophy for a fourth time, in the record books.

The winning coach

Unai Emery

Boundless energy, intensity and attention to detail are hallmarks of the UEFA Europa League's serial winner

It is not hard to see why Sevilla FC's players have seemingly boundless reserves of hunger and energy. Just one look at the figure with the dark suit and slicked-back hair shouting and gesturing on the touchline of Warsaw's National Stadium on 27 May offered a sizeable indication of the power source of a team about to claim back-to-back UEFA Europa League titles.

Sir Alex Ferguson, looking on that evening, was so impressed by the Basque that he joked that he "would hate to lose playing for him" – praise indeed from a serial winner. Emery's feat was to emulate Juande Ramos's achievement of successive UEFA Cup triumphs with Sevilla, and Sir Alex added: "I came up against him when he was at Valencia and he was the same then – he has an energy and the players see the energy. They are not necessarily listening when he is shouting and trying to change tactics – I don't think they even look at him because they are afraid to look across – but he has got fantastic value and great energy, and he is serious about the game."

Emery is certainly that. He appeared a fraction less animated on the touchline this year compared with his first European final against SL Benfica in 2014, yet his intense approach to his work has certainly not subsided. When the final whistle blew on Sevilla's semi-final victory against ACF Fiorentina, Emery went to his former Valencia CF player Joaquín – now with the Italian club – and related how he and his team had spent three days preparing how to beat the Viola. The 43-year-old spends up to 12 hours editing each video that he shows his squad on the opposition – an attention to detail rewarded in Europe, where they lost just one of 15 games.

After the final against FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk, Ioan Lupescu, the UEFA chief technical officer, highlighted the impressive variety and threat of Sevilla's set pieces – an area for which Emery is renowned in Spain. His use of substitutes during their campaign also warrants admiration. Three of the four Sevilla goals in the narrow quarter-final win against FC Zenit, for instance, came from players who had not started the match, and this is the fruit of his ability to maintain a positive atmosphere in his squad despite constant player rotations.



European success is becoming a habit for Unai Emery

“ I learned a long time ago that you have to live in the present without thinking about the future ”

That atmosphere, despite his demanding work ethic and double training sessions, may owe something to his players, who realise Emery's methods will get the best out of them. One striking example is Alexis Vidal, the wide player recruited from UD Almería in summer 2014, whom Emery turned into an attacking full-back of such quality that Spain called him up and FC Barcelona ended up signing him shortly after Warsaw. There is also Éver Banega, a player who Emery knew well from his Valencia days, and who has had a new lease of life since arriving to replace Ivan Rakitić, one of 18 departures after Sevilla's first UEFA Europa League triumph.

The message from Emery after Sevilla's victory on 27 May was that he would enjoy the moment after a difficult month that included the death of his father, Juan, a former goalkeeper. "I learned

a long time ago that you have to live in the present without thinking about the future," he said, though – despite interest from other sides – he subsequently committed to another season in Seville where the challenge of UEFA Champions League football, the club's reward for Warsaw, beckoned. "I believe we have demonstrated that we are a club that looks to grow and expand. We have improved as a club and will continue to do so by playing in the Champions League." So, you suspect, will their coach.

Technical topics

Quick transitions and penetrative passing combined with players' increased positional freedom caught the eye

Tom De Sutter's strength on the ball was central to Club Brugge's success



Penetration over possession – the long and short of it

If recent seasons have been notable for teams trying to emulate the 'tiki-taka' style of FC Barcelona and Spain's national side, the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League campaign provided signs of a shift towards a more direct football, built on quick transitions. Sir Alex Ferguson, a member of the UEFA technical observers' group, praised the "positive attitude to possession of the ball" that he saw that night and described this as preferable to the pale and "pedantic" imitations of the Barcelona model that he had witnessed on occasion elsewhere. "The difference with Barcelona is they are doing it in their opponents' half; we are seeing possession of the ball now too much in teams' own half of the pitch, and it is not as entertaining for the fans," he explained.

Instead of possession, the key to winning football matches, according to the former Manchester United FC manager, is penetration – which today comes from transitional play, with players swarming forward in numbers. "The first pass forward – an accurate pass forward, which allows players to sprint forward in support of the ball – is important," Sir Alex noted.

It was notable that the two Italian semi-final sides, SSC Napoli and ACF Fiorentina, employed deep, fast passes along the ground. "The number one priority is not keeping possession but going straight forward to the goal," said Dušan Fízel, another technical observer. Christian Maggio's defence-splitting pass to Marek Hamšík in Napoli's 4-1 quarter-final win at VfL Wolfsburg was one such example, though Fízel went on to cite a different kind of longer forward ball from another quarter-final tie. "When I saw Dnipro's game against Club Brugge, [Yevhen] Konoplyanka created three chances just from the left side, with diagonal balls of 50–60m to open the other side."

That particular game featured the traditional long ball, too, for as FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk had success with the use of Nikola Kalinić and Yevhen Seleznyov as target men, so did Club Brugge, who had Tom De Sutter filling that role. László Szalai was an observer at the Belgians' round of 16 tie against Beşiktaş JK and added: "For a defender, if you can make a good long pass and you have quick players or a strong central striker, it is a good method, and Brugge were very strong at this. They played straight balls up to De Sutter." The fact that Club Brugge went 15 games unbeaten from the third qualifying round through to the quarter-finals suggests it was a ploy that served them well.

Analysis

Making space for the full-back – why rotation is key

The modern full-back has long been identified as a key attacking force at a time when the sight of old-style wingers hugging the touchline is increasingly rare. For the technical observers, one particularly noteworthy feature of Sevilla's play was the way they created space for their full-backs, starting with the two wide attackers moving inside. "Unai Emery lets the two wide midfielders be very free in their roles, and they come in often to support the centre-forward – there is a lot of movement that creates the space for the full-backs," said Lars Lagerbäck, the Iceland coach and a UEFA technical observer.

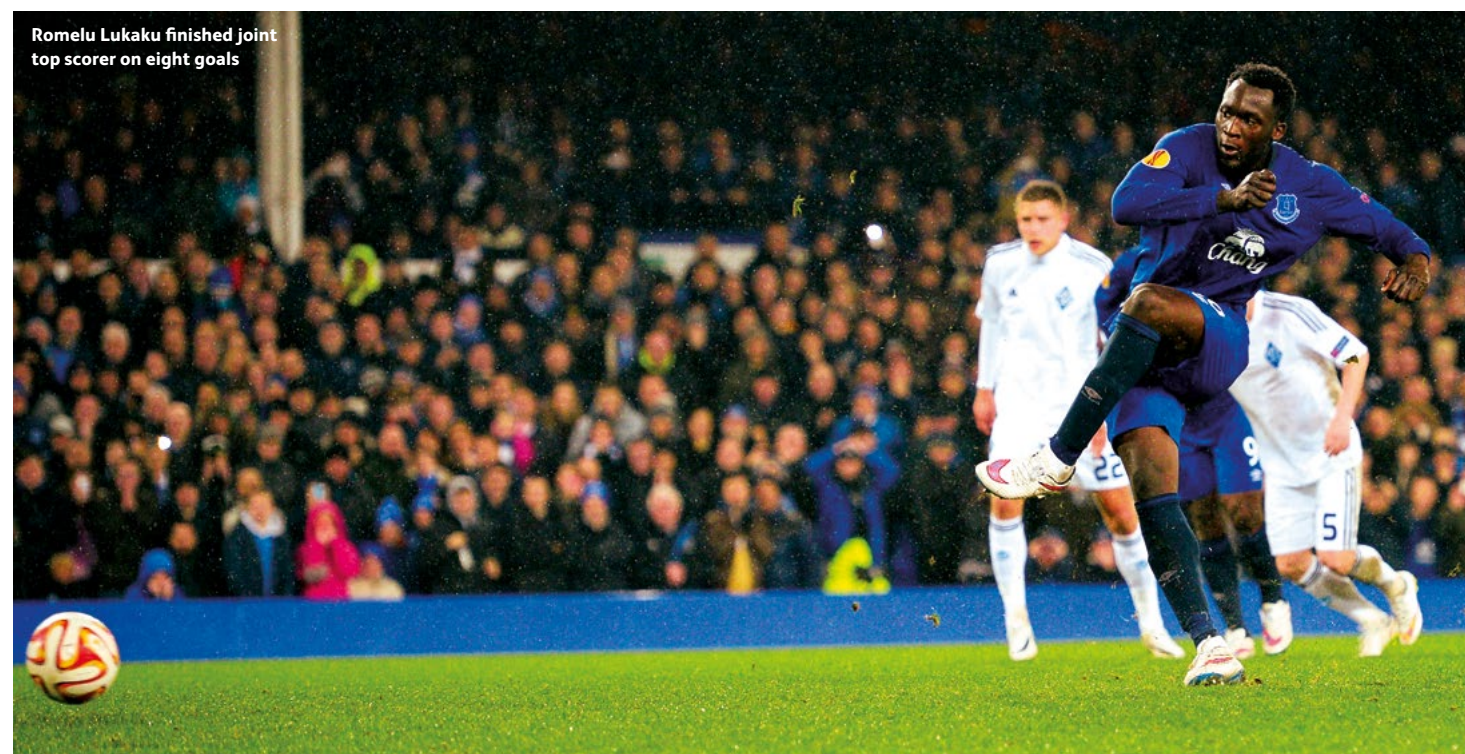
One consequence of the winger moving into the space between the opposition full-back and centre-back is that it can leave the defending full-back unsure whether to track him or not – a doubt that may be exploited. The movement of other players is crucial, too, and in Sevilla's case, there was always a screening midfielder – Stéphane Mbia on one side, Grzegorz Krychowiak on the other – waiting to breach the gap left by their marauding full-backs, and providing the necessary support for the centre-backs.

In top-level European football, it seems this movement of players is near-constant. László Szalai noted the fluidity of Fiorentina's players as they rotated positions in the round of 16 tie with AS Roma. He did not just see the left-winger Joaquín step inside to create space for Marcos Alonso's overlap, but also saw the roles reversed with Alonso surging inside. The rotation of midfielders David Pizarro, Milan Badelj and Borja Valero was integral to their strategy – and also testament to these players' tactical understanding. "They change their position and have a good feeling in other positions – they know what to do," Szalai added.

When space does appear, the more adventurous full-back is not just looking to get to the byline and deliver a cross but to get inside the penalty box himself. "They don't go only down the line, they go inside and head to goal," said Szalai. Sevilla's Aleix Vidal offered a prominent example when scoring twice for Sevilla in their semi-final home victory against Fiorentina.



Sevilla full-back Aleix Vidal was a thorn in Fiorentina's side



Romelu Lukaku finished joint top scorer on eight goals



Kevin De Bruyne was a prime example of the new breed of No10

Changing movements of playmakers and strikers

One of the most exciting attacking talents on show in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League was the Belgian international playmaker Kevin De Bruyne. With five goals and five assists, he played a pivotal role in his Wolfsburg side's advance to the last eight, and he also offered an impressive example of the new, mobile breed of No10.

This is not a player fixed in a central area but one able to roam the width of the pitch, swapping positions with the players either side of him – in De Bruyne's case, he was just as likely to create something from the right or left as the traditional No10 space. Lars Lagerbäck suggested that this fluidity was a product of the 4-2-3-1 formation that ten of the sides who appeared in the last 16 of the competition used at some point or another during the campaign.

"It is a new dimension with playing 4-2-3-1," said Lagerbäck. "From what I have seen, they are not locked in their positions but there is a lot of movement, especially among these three offensive midfielders. De Bruyne is a good example but also Éver Banega from Sevilla and Marek Hamšík [at Napoli]. It is a little bit like the old playmaker but then they were more in a central position; now they are moving around a lot."

Another point raised at the UEFA technical observers' meeting was that the movement of the men in front of the playmakers has changed too. While there are exceptions, Dušan Fitzel suggested today's centre-forward is likely to spend much of his time standing level with the last defender – rather than with his back to goal waiting to get the ball and lay it off. "They are always trying to get the ball on a penetrating run behind the line, to open up space and try to score. Now you see the striker staying next to the defender and when he gets the ball, he immediately takes it on. Before, he would stay in front of the defender." One downside is that a striker risks being caught offside more frequently – hence Romelu Lukaku, the eight-goal joint top scorer from Everton FC, also ranking third in the competition for offsides (14).

Analysis

On the defensive

The final between Sevilla and Dnipro was the competition's highest-scoring since 2003 yet for one of these two teams, the 2014/15 campaign was all about defensive resilience. Dnipro had kept eight clean sheets and conceded just 11 goals in 16 matches (play-offs included) prior to arriving in Warsaw, and offered observers from eastern Europe a reminder of the old Soviet-era philosophy with their team discipline, compact set-up and often cagey approach.

They certainly bucked the trend towards open, attacking football in the competition, yet according to Ghenadie Scurtul, the UEFA technical observer from Moldova, the pragmatism and "conservative style" of coach Myron Markevych was evidence of his ability to adapt to his circumstances. "They are playing defensively here because of the strengths of the players," Scurtul said, noting that this was a departure from Markevych's previous approach with FC Metalist Kharkiv. "Ukrainian football is hard-working with a long-ball style from the Soviet Union days but at Metalist, Markevych preferred to build up from the back with not too much long ball."

During a season when Paolo Maldini, the great AC Milan and Italy defender, told one English newspaper that "there are no more defenders", Dnipro's game plan might have seemed like an admirable throwback to some. Maldini himself would surely have admired the way they frustrated an SSC Napoli side with greater attacking options in the semi-final.

According to UEFA's chief technical officer, Ioan Lupescu, Sevilla – for all their attacking variety – also displayed impressive defensive nous. He cited the way they handled Dnipro's target man, Nikola Kalinić, in the final, with the two centre-backs, Daniel Carriço and Timothée Kolodziejczak, keeping a tight watch throughout. "Emery pushed the defenders up to the No9, to stay very close," Lupescu explained. This was a routine tactic in decades past when defenders would stay tight to the attacker for 90 minutes and, when the ball arrived, either win it or commit a foul. Times have changed, and there were matches in the 2014/15 season where, as Lupescu said, opposition defenders left even Lionel Messi in two or three metres of space. Sevilla's approach, like Dnipro's, evoked a different era – and it worked.

**Sevilla centre-backs
Daniel Carriço and
Timothée Kolodziejczak
kept a tight watch
throughout the final**



Statistics

Possession

Of the sides that reached the last 16, finalists Sevilla and Dnipro had the least possession

Top teams (overall)		
	Team	Average possession (%)
1	Ajax	61
2	Mönchengladbach	60
3	Tottenham	59
4	Athletic	57
5	Fiorentina	55
-	København	55
-	Olympiacos	55
-	PSV	55
-	Sparta	55

Thorgan Hazard on the ball for Mönchengladbach – only Ajax enjoyed more possession than the German side

We have noted elsewhere in this technical report the importance of swift, incisive transitional play, and the possession statistics for the 2014/15 competition seem to underline this point.

Of the 16 clubs that went furthest in the UEFA Europa League, it was actually the two with the lowest ball possession rate that went all the way to the final.

Sevilla FC had 48% of possession on average – a significant drop from the 55% they had enjoyed in the 2013/14 campaign, but a statistic very much in sync with the dashing full-back play and damaging counterattacks seen from Unai Emery's side. Tellingly, in only one of eight knockout matches before the final – the home quarter-final against FC Zenit – did they have more of the ball than the opposition. Along the way, they came across two teams who kept the ball for considerably longer periods: semi-final opponents ACF Fiorentina (average 55%) and VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach (60%), the German side who pushed them hard in both legs in the round of 32. Indeed, against

Gladbach in Germany, Sevilla had only 30% of possession yet sneaked a 3-2 win. It is worth adding that only AFC Ajax – sticking to their long-established traditions with 61% of possession – retained the ball for longer in their matches than the Bundesliga club, who had qualified unbeaten from the group stage.

As for FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk, their more defensive approach and use of longer balls meant they averaged just 45% possession overall. Their home game against Club Brugge KV was the only one in the knockout stage in which they had more possession than their opponents, while in the final in Warsaw, they had 42% of the ball compared with 58% for Sevilla.

If Sevilla and Dnipro's success suggests possession was not the key to progress in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League, the table on the left reinforces the point: among the top nine teams who had most possession in the competition, only two made it to the round of 16.

Statistics

Passing

Pure passing games only got teams so far in 2014/15

The top three teams in the possession chart in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League also attempted the most passes on average per match. AFC Ajax and Tottenham Hotspur FC ranked among the leading trio for the second season running but it was VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach who led the way with 612 attempted passes per match, with an average completion rate of 565 passes (92% accuracy).

Gladbach, with an influential deep-lying playmaker in Granit Xhaka, ended the Bundesliga season second only to FC Bayern München in these categories and on the European stage, Lucien Favre's men repeated the formula to positive effect, finishing the group stage unbeaten in first place.

But it was a different story for FC København, fifth in the passing table. Although they matched Mönchengladbach for accuracy (92%), the Danish team's passing had little end product – they scored only five goals and won just once in six games.

It is interesting to note that aside from Ajax, the only clubs from the last 16 to feature in the overall top ten for most passes attempted per match were the Italian trio of SSC Napoli, FC Internazionale Milano and ACF Fiorentina – and for Napoli and Fiorentina, this approach was particularly productive as they advanced to the semi-finals.

As with the possession statistics on the adjacent page, these passing figures highlight the counterattacking styles of the two finalists given that Sevilla FC and FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk were the only clubs among the last 16 to average fewer than 360 passes per match. They also had the lowest rates for passing accuracy (83% and 82% respectively), which would seem to be a consequence of playing fewer safer passes as they moved the ball forward quickly.

As with the possession statistics, passing figures highlighted the counterattacking styles of the two Warsaw finalists



Napoli's Gökhan Inler attempted (566) and completed (523) the most passes



Tottenham coach Mauricio Pochettino



Frank de Boer in training with Ajax

The top ten teams (overall)		
Team	Average attempted passes per match	Average accuracy (%)
Mönchengladbach	612	92
Ajax	544	88
Tottenham	517	88
Athletic	497	87
København	484	92
Inter	479	88
Napoli	474	87
Fiorentina	458	88
Liverpool	456	84
Sparta Praha	456	88

These tables give the average number of passes attempted during a match (passes) and the percentage of passes successfully received by a team-mate (accuracy)

How the last 16 compared		
Team	Average attempted passes per match	Average accuracy (%)
Ajax	544	88
Inter	479	88
Napoli	474	87
Fiorentina	458	88
Villarreal	449	86
Beşiktaş	444	87
Wolfsburg	442	88
Roma	421	87
Everton	405	88
Torino	401	88
Zenit	394	86
Dynamo Kyiv	385	87
Club Brugge	385	84
Dinamo Moskva	365	88
Sevilla	357	83
Dnipro	305	82

Goalscoring analysis

Route to goal

Crosses and counters were prime sources of goals, while corners were also rewarding

A total of 548 goals were scored in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League, from the opening night of the group stage to the final in Warsaw. This was the highest total recorded since the 2011/12 campaign, though the average of 2.67 per game was a fraction lower than the 2.89 average of the 2014/15 UEFA Champions League.

The second half of matches brought more goals (310 to 236 in total) yet, interestingly, the most productive 15-minute period came in the first half – from 16 to 30 minutes, when 97 goals were recorded (18% of the overall number). This was one more than the 96 scored between 76 and 90 minutes, which would seem a more obviously fertile period, with teams chasing goals and tired minds and legs taking an effect. Sevilla FC struck in this late window in four of their eight knockout matches prior to the final.

The two other goals scored in the 2014/15 campaign came in extra time – both in the round of 16 tie between AFC Ajax and FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk, with the Ukrainian side getting the away goal they needed to progress. As for goals in those often frantic moments of added time at the end of the second half, this campaign featured exactly the same number (29) as in 2013/14 – 5% of the overall total. ACF Fiorentina scored in the dying moments in both legs of their 3-0 aggregate quarter-final win against FC Dynamo Kyiv. The goalscoring analysis in this review and the chart on the facing page are based on the 169 goals scored during the knockout rounds, all of which were watched by UEFA technical observers.

21%

Over a fifth of goals scored in the knockout stage came from crosses or cutbacks from the byline



Gonzalo Higuaín (above) hits the target for Napoli against Wolfsburg; Antunes (right) celebrates scoring from a free-kick against Everton

Set plays

Dead-ball situations led to 27% of the goals scored in the 2014/15 knockout stage. The most prominent source was corners, with 18 (40% of the set-play total) coming either directly from or following a corner. This number included both Sevilla goals in their quarter-final comeback at home to FC Zenit and Grzegorz Krychowiak’s equaliser in the final. Headers made up 11 of the goals from corners.

Thirteen penalties were converted (29% of the total), but the knockout stage featured only four goals scored directly from free-kicks. Dnipro’s Ruslan Rotan provided two of them – the first in their round of 32 tie against Olympiacos FC, the second his precise chip into the Sevilla goal in the final. Giovanni dos Santos of Villarreal CF beat Sevilla’s Sergio Rico with another dead ball in the last 16, when Kevin De Bruyne also offered further evidence of his shooting ability with his strike for VfL Wolfsburg against FC Internazionale Milano.

When the goals were scored (full season)	
First half	236
1–15 minutes	60
16–30	97
31–45	72
45+	7
Second half	310
46–60	92
61–75	93
76–90	96
90+	29
Extra time	2
91–105	1
106–120	1
Total	548



Goal type (knockout stage)			
Category	Action	Guidelines	Goals
Set play			
	Corner	Direct from or following a corner	18
	Free-kick (direct)	Direct from a free-kick	4
	Free-kick (indirect)	Following a free-kick	8
	Penalty	Spot kick (or follow-up)	13
	Throw-in	Following a throw-in	2
		Total set play goals	45
Open play			
	Combination	Wall pass or three-man (or more) combination play	24
	Cross	Cross from the wing	26
	Cut-back	Pass back from the byline	10
	Diagonal	Diagonal pass into the penalty box	10
	Run with the ball	Dribble and close-range shot or dribble and pass	12
	Long-range shot	Direct shot or shot and rebound	22
	Forward pass	Through pass or pass over the defence	14
	Defensive error	Bad back pass or mistake by the goalkeeper	5
	Own goal	Goal by the opponent	1
		Total open play goals	124
Total goals			169

Open play

Just as last season, crosses were a major source of goals in the UEFA Europa League, with 26 of the 124 open-play goals coming from centres. Add the ten goals scored following cutbacks from the byline and the rewards for effective wing play were quite apparent – 21% of the goals scored. Sevilla and Dnipro both profited in this manner and there were other noteworthy examples: in the round of 32, five of the nine goals scored in the tie between Athletic Club and Torino FC came from crosses. Yevhen Konoplyanka’s brilliant cross for Yevhen Seleznyov’s semi-final winner against SSC Napoli, meanwhile, also gave us one of the best headed goals of the tournament – one of 32 headers overall.

Meanwhile, just 12 goals were scored from runs with the ball (7% of the total) but 22 from long-range shots (13%), including the stunning 30m drive by Dynamo Kyiv left-back Antunes against Everton FC. To underline the importance

of quick transitions, it is also worth noting that 32 goals came from counterattacks – a category not included above – and Sevilla were as adept at scoring this way as any other team. Vitolo used his pace to score twice on the counter against VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach in the round of 32, then teed up Kevin Gameiro for his decisive goal at Zenit in the quarter-final.

Goals per season			
Season	Goals	Matches	Average
2009/10	547	205	2.67
2010/11	551	205	2.69
2011/12	585	205	2.85
2012/13	521	205	2.54
2013/14	475	205	2.32
2014/15	548	205	2.67

Goalscoring analysis

Best goals from open play

Tottenham midfielder Erik Lamela’s ‘rabona’ was the pick of the bunch from the season’s top goals

There were some stunning goals among the 548 scored in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League and an impressive variety too – a point underlined by the top ten selected by the UEFA technical observers’ group.

The winning goal – for sheer audacity, along with technical brilliance – was the ‘rabona’ strike by Tottenham Hotspur FC’s Erik Lamela. A trick more often seen by a player delivering a cross, it came in a group stage fixture against Asteras Tripolis FC as the Argentinian wrapped his left leg around the back of his right and curled a shot into the net from the edge of the box.

Lamela’s strike took top spot ahead of the acrobatic overhead kick that Vasyl Kobin scored in FC Metalist Kharkiv’s defeat at Legia Warszawa. That was very much a feat of great individual timing and athleticism – and all the better for being executed with defenders at close hand.

Two of the other top-ten choices were scored in Warsaw – both in the final. Nikola Kalinić’s headed goal for FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk was the difficult made to look easy as the striker nodded a ball on to Matheus then raced into the box to meet the

winger’s immaculate first-time cross. Carlos Bacca’s first goal in the same match was the fruit of his own excellent movement and José Antonio Reyes’s defence-splitting pass.

Stuart Armstrong’s effort for Celtic FC against FC Internazionale Milano followed a superb passing sequence that took the ball from one penalty box to the other. There was also an extended build-up to Tolgay Arslan’s strike for Beşiktaş JK against Liverpool FC.

Inter’s Rodrigo Palacio, meanwhile, was lauded by UEFA’s observers for the way that he stroked in a falling ball against VfL Wolfsburg – not as easy as it might look – while Denis Cheryshev took a more emphatic approach when driving in a sweet left-footed volley for Villarreal CF against FC Salzburg.

Andoni Iraola’s goal for Athletic Club against Torino FC followed Beñat’s diagonal ball over the defence, which Iraola killed with a fine first touch before dinking the ball over the goalkeeper. As for Gonzalo Higuaín, he contributed just the second header in the top ten – a cleverly angled effort against FC Dinamo Moskva.

	Scorer	Match	Time
1	Erik Lamela	Tottenham 5-1 Asteras	30
2	Vasyl Kobin	Legia 2-1 Metalist	22
3	Tolgay Arslan	Beşiktaş 1-0 Liverpool	72
4	Nikola Kalinić	Dnipro 2-3 Sevilla	7
5	Carlos Bacca	Dnipro 2-3 Sevilla	31
6	Denis Cheryshev	Villarreal 2-1 Salzburg	54
7	Andoni Iraola	Athletic 2-3 Torino	44
8	Stuart Armstrong	Celtic 3-3 Inter	24
9	Gonzalo Higuaín	Napoli 3-1 Dinamo Moskva	25
10	Rodrigo Palacio	Inter 1-2 Wolfsburg	71



Best goals from set plays

Ruslan Rotan lit up the final while Kevin De Bruyne’s memorable campaign was crowned by a cracking volley

The first choice of UEFA’s technical observers, Kevin De Bruyne’s outstanding volley for VfL Wolfsburg against LOSC Lille, showed that the danger does not necessarily pass when the ball is headed out of the box after a corner. That said, not every player has the technique that enabled De Bruyne to send the ball flying back into the top corner of the net.

Denis Suárez’s lovely volley for Sevilla FC against FC Zenit also came in the second phase from a corner and, as his side’s 88th-minute winning goal, was crucial too.

The top-five selection also showcased two different ways to score a direct free-kick, with FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk skipper Ruslan Rotan’s chipped effort over the Sevilla wall in the final and Granit Xhaka’s ferocious left-foot strike for VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach against Villarreal CF – the Swiss midfielder taking a longer run-up and smashing the ball in off the underside of the crossbar from 30m.

Oleh Gusev’s effort against Everton FC was the product of a clever corner routine, the FC Dynamo Kyiv midfielder running to the near post to volley Andriy Yarmolenko’s delivery into the net.

	Scorer	Match	Time
1	Kevin De Bruyne	Wolfsburg 1-1 Lille	82
2	Oleh Gusev	Everton 2-1 Dynamo Kyiv	14
3	Granit Xhaka	Villarreal 2-2 Mönchengladbach	67
4	Denis Suárez	Sevilla 2-1 Zenit	88
5	Ruslan Rotan	Dnipro 2-3 Sevilla	44



Making the breakthrough

While the first goal frequently proved decisive, successful comebacks were on the rise – as highlighted in the final

Club Brugge came from behind to win both round of 16 matches against Beşiktaş

Result of the team scoring first		
Wins	Draws	Defeats
136	32	21
66%	16%	10%
There were 16 0-0 draws		



Dinamo Moskva showed their powers of recovery against Panathinaikos

It was less common to see clubs turn games around away from home: of the 21 matches where teams conceded first and won, there were only six comebacks by a visiting team.

Only two sides in the whole competition, meanwhile, achieved turnarounds both at home and away. Everton came back in both legs of their round of 32 tie against BSC Young Boys while Club Brugge did the same against Beşiktaş JK in the last 16.

The effect of losing a lead can affect a team's mentality and this seemed the case with Panathinaikos FC in Europe in 2014/15. Having lost a UEFA Champions League qualifier against R. Standard de Liège after surrendering the lead at home in Athens, they subsequently led but lost against both PSV Eindhoven and FC Dinamo Moskva in the UEFA Europa League group stage, before wobbling again and conceding a late equaliser in the 1-1 home draw with Estoril Praia.

Hitting the target

Sevilla's efficiency in front of goal made the difference as the holders took their chances

The old stereotype about clinically efficient Italian teams had no place in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League, as the two leading Serie A contenders both suffered at times from a lack of ruthlessness.

Semi-finalists ACF Fiorentina had more goal attempts (233) than any other side, yet also the most shots off target (92), and so ended up joint seventh in the goals chart with 21. In short, it took them 11.1 shots for every goal scored.

SSC Napoli were the second-highest scorers with 26, but also had the second-most attempts (230), and in their semi-final defeat by FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk were especially profligate. The Naples team ended the tie with just one goal to show from 39 attempts, 13 on target.

VfL Wolfsburg finished with the third-highest goal tally (24) from the third-most attempts (199) – the product of an open approach that also led to their goalkeeper, Diego Benaglio, making the most saves. They set the tone in an extraordinary opening game at Everton FC, where they had twice as many goal attempts (24-12) and attempts on target (12-6) as their hosts, yet lost 4-1.

For the second year running FC Salzburg finished the campaign with the most shots per game (17.13). This meant that despite their last-32 elimination, they still ended up posting the joint fourth-highest goals total with 23 – and the best goals-per-game average (2.88).

Top scorers (overall)		
Player	Team	Goals
Alan	Salzburg	8
Romelu Lukaku	Everton	8
Carlos Bacca	Sevilla	7
Gonzalo Higuaín	Napoli	7
Stefanos Athanasiadis	PAOK	6
Guillaume Hoarau	Young Boys	6
Jonathan Soriano	Salzburg	6
Luciano Vietto	Villarreal	6
Lior Refaellov	Club Brugge	6



Celtic captain Scott Brown takes aim

As for Sevilla, their tally of 29 goals was the highest in the competition since winners Club Atlético de Madrid hit 33 in 2010/11. They had an impressively efficient ratio of one goal per 5.86 attempts – which, among the last 16, was bettered only by Everton (5.67).

Finally, the statistics show that despite Dnipro's more defensive strategy, they actually averaged fractionally more goal attempts per game than Sevilla – 11.47 to 11.33. Contrary to the evidence of that Napoli tie, though, they were actually the least efficient finishers among the last 16.

Goal attempts (round of 16 teams)				
Teams	Goals	Total attempts	Average attempts per match	Average attempts per goal
Sevilla	29	170	11.33	5.86
Napoli	26	230	16.43	8.85
Wolfsburg	24	199	16.58	8.29
Dynamo Kyiv	23	152	12.67	6.61
Villarreal	22	153	15.3	6.95
Club Brugge	21	145	12.08	6.9
Everton	21	119	11.9	5.67
Fiorentina	21	233	16.64	11.1
Torino	15	127	12.7	8.47
Dnipro	15	172	11.47	11.47
Beşiktaş	14	122	12.2	8.71
Dinamo Moskva	13	137	13.7	10.54
Inter	12	130	13	10.83
Zenit	9	86	14.33	9.56
Ajax	6	38	9.5	6.33
Roma	4	42	10.5	10.5

Sevilla lead by example

Enthusiasm, drive and belief pulled in the fans and proved a winning formula for many clubs



Sevilla's Vicente Iborra thanks the fans

Positive attitudes pay off

Sevilla FC's victory in Warsaw did not just elevate them above FC Internazionale Milano, Juventus and Liverpool FC as the team with most UEFA Cup and UEFA Europa League triumphs; it also moved Spain level with Italy on a record nine wins each. It is striking to note that four of those Spanish successes have come in the six years of the rebranded UEFA Europa League, while over the last decade Spain has provided eight of the 20 finalists. All in all, that tells us this is a competition that brings the best out of Liga clubs and, for Sir Alex Ferguson, it is a reflection not only of their quality but of the positive approach they take to the competition. "You have to congratulate Spain – all their teams do well in the UEFA Europa League; they try their very best," he said. "You look at the finals over the last few years and the Spanish teams are there all the time. They have a great attitude to it."

Sir Alex detected an increasingly enthusiastic attitude towards the challenge of the UEFA Europa League elsewhere, too, in 2014/15 – his view being that the newly introduced carrot of

a UEFA Champions League place was a positive development, encouraging some clubs to put increased emphasis on the competition when juggling the twin demands of domestic and European football. If that is a question particularly for sides from some of the continent's bigger leagues, Willi Rutensteiner – the UEFA technical observer from Austria – suggested that teams from other, smaller nations see the UEFA Europa League as a priceless opportunity for their coaches and players to test themselves against international opposition.

"For clubs in small countries it is very important to have a chance to play against teams like Liverpool and Napoli. This helps them improve and is an important aspect of European football." That the world's top individual talents gravitate towards the UEFA Champions League does not detract from the competition either, according to Rutensteiner, who joined other UEFA technical observers in praising the high standards overall. "The coaches really did a superb job and the tactics were at the highest level," he said. Rutensteiner's

enthusiasm was matched by the paying public as well, judging by some of the high attendances during the 2014/15 campaign. There was a UEFA Europa League record crowd of 67,553 for FC Dynamo Kyiv's round of 16 victory against Everton FC, while Beşiktaş JK drew attendances of 65,110 and 63,324 respectively for their knockout round home fixtures at the Atatürk Olimpiyat Stadium against Club Brugge KV and Liverpool. There were impressive travelling contingents too, with VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach and Everton each taking around 10,000 supporters to away games in the group stage against FC Zürich and LOSC Lille – and ensuring the kind of atmospheres that help bring the best out of coaches and players alike.

Men on a mission

"We should give great respect to Dnipro, taking into account the situation in Ukraine," said Ioan Lupescu, UEFA's chief technical officer, the day after the UEFA Europa League final. "What they achieved this year is really impressive." It certainly was – indeed it seems fair to say the journey made by outsiders FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk to the final was one of the most compelling narratives of the entire European season. Myron Markevych's team had to play their UEFA Europa League home ties 450km from Dnipropetrovsk in Kyiv because of the conflict in Ukraine, yet they took up the gauntlet by producing their best ever continental campaign.

The Dnipro players had the advantage of working with an experienced coach in Markevych, previously a quarter-finalist in the competition with FC Metalist Kharkiv in 2012 and a man known for his ability to foster an atmosphere of trust and respect in a dressing room. Yet there was undoubtedly an additional factor at play in their fairy-tale run. It is not unusual for coaches to try to create a siege mentality, but Markevych's men already had a common cause – they were galvanised by the obstacles before them and once they had squeezed through the group stage, their momentum grew.

"It was very difficult because we were playing to empty stands," said Dnipro's long-serving captain, Ruslan Rotan. "We really wanted people in Dnipropetrovsk to watch us, but with the situation in our country we had to follow the rules – and to some extent that also made us stronger." UEFA technical observer Ghenadie Scurtul noted that up to Dynamo Kyiv's quarter-final elimination, Dnipro were playing in front of sparse crowds in the capital as Dynamo fans chose to watch their team's away matches on television, yet they finished up as the standard bearers for Ukraine during a difficult time for their country. Come the final, Markevych's squad actually helped to pay for some of their supporters' transport to



Dnipro's togetherness took them all the way to Warsaw

Warsaw, where the Dnipro end was a blur of yellow and blue.

Technical observer Dušan Fitzel, who had seen their goalless draw at Club Brugge in the quarter-finals, said of Dnipro that: "They had a motivation to show all of Europe 'this is Ukraine.'" Fitzel went on to remember his own psychological approach when, as a player, he reached the semi-finals of the 1985/86 European Cup Winners' Cup

with an unsung FK Dukla Praha side (losing to Dynamo Kyiv). "The mental power is there," he said, "because first you want to win something and second, you want to sell yourself – it is a chance for you to show Europe that you are a good football player. This is something for the Ukrainian players, with the situation they are in now. It is a shop window." And they certainly caught the eye.

Markevych's men already had a common cause – they were galvanised by the obstacles before them



Dynamo Kyiv set a new UEFA Europa League attendance record against Everton

Top ten UEFA Europa League attendances		
Attendances	Match	Date
67,553	FC Dynamo Kyiv 5-2 Everton FC	19/03/15
67,328	Manchester United FC 1-2 AFC Ajax	23/02/12
65,110	Beşiktaş JK 1-3 Club Brugge KV	19/03/15
63,324	Beşiktaş JK 1-0 Liverpool FC	26/02/15
62,629	SL Benfica 2-1 Liverpool FC	01/04/10
60,026	SL Benfica 4-1 PSV Eindhoven	07/04/11
59,265	Manchester United FC 2-3 Athletic Club	08/03/12
58,500	Celtic FC 3-3 FC Internazionale Milano	19/02/15
57,778	SL Benfica 2-1 Braga	28/04/11
55,402	SL Benfica 2-1 Juventus	24/04/14

Talking points

The value of experience and clever recruitment

It is said there is no substitute for experience – and this was certainly a vital ingredient in Sevilla's 2014/15 UEFA Europa League success. Unai Emery's men had shown the ability to dig out a victory several times during their victorious 2013/14 campaign, and their know-how told again as they survived scrapes in tight games against HNK Rijeka – at the end of the group stage – and Mönchengladbach and FC Zenit in the knockout rounds. This meant that in a finely balanced final, they were the team able to step up and impose their will decisively on the contest.

"Our opponents were more experienced and that made the difference," said Markevych, the defeated coach, afterwards and his words were echoed by technical observer László Szalai. Citing the Liga side's winning mentality, he said: "I had a feeling in the stadium that, at 2-2, for Dnipro it was an excellent result. Sevilla found this small extra thing and they won the game with their greater international experience."

Sevilla had the confidence of having been there before, which meant – as Dušan Tittel said at the technical observers' meeting the following

day – that "for almost the whole 90 minutes Sevilla played the way they wanted to play". In this sense they benefited from having five players who had begun the previous year's showpiece against SL Benfica – including the man with the most UEFA Europa League outings to his name, defender Daniel Carriço (48), and the veteran José Antonio Reyes, who made his 91st UEFA club appearance in Warsaw.

It is worth mentioning, though, that another five players in the starting XI were not in Emery's 2014/15 squad – and three of them, goalkeeper Sergio Rico, scoring midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak and influential wing-back Aleix Vidal, had not figured in a UEFA club competition match before the season kicked off. Yet they contributed to a winning blend.

This brings us to another significant element in the Sevilla success story, and the reason why they are a model for other clubs – and coaches – to look at. Through their long-serving director of football Monchi, they excel in recruitment, in picking up unpolished gems (like Carriço, barely used by his previous side, Reading FC in England), and this enables them to regroup and go again.

It is a heartening example that teams can continue to flourish even when the big beasts come calling for their star men, as happened when Ivan Rakitić, Federico Fazio and Alberto Moreno departed in summer 2014. It raises the hope too that money is not necessarily everything. As Emery himself told one interviewer on the eve of the final: "If you have money but don't generate feeling, it's worthless."



Sevilla had to dig deep against Rijeka



Daniel Carriço, another astute Seville signing

Statistics

Discipline

Finalists Dnipro averaged more yellow cards and fouls than any other side

Fouls and cards

The 205 matches of the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League produced 844 yellow cards – at a ratio of 4.12 per game – along with 40 reds.

Dnipro were comfortably the team with the most yellow cards, with 56 accumulated over their 15 games from the group stage onwards – an average of 3.73 per game. The Ukrainian side both committed (18.07 per match) and suffered (16.47 per match) the most fouls in the competition and a trio of their players collected more bookings than anybody, with seven apiece for Artem Fedetskiy, Jaba Kankava and Ruslan Rotan. Two of Rotan's yellows came in the group stage loss to Inter in which he was sent off.

The only teams with a similar ratio were FC Zenit and Olympiacos FC, who had 3.5 bookings per match. The Greek club only played twice, in their round of 32 loss to Dnipro, but also managed to pick up a straight red card for Luka Milivojević.

Sevilla collected the second-highest number of yellow cards (34) but this was a consequence of playing 15 times. The Andalusians, whose ratio was 2.27 per game, were one of 22 sides with an average of between two and three yellows for each match played. Another 27 clubs averaged between one and two, while SSC Napoli – the team with the lowest ratio (0.79) – ended up with only 11 yellow cards from their 14 matches.

Offsides

The team caught offside most regularly in the competition was Torino FC, whose players saw the assistant's flag 44 times in ten matches at a ratio of 4.4 per game. Two other sides – SK Slovan Bratislava and Legia Warszawa – averaged four a game, with Legia's Michał Kucharczyk the player with the most offsides in the entire competition (19 in eight appearances). FC København had only one offside in six group matches – a reflection perhaps of their failure to make an impact in the opposition half as they finished bottom of their section and scored only five goals.



Dnipro goalkeeper Denys Boyko runs into trouble against Ajax

Fouls and cards (round of 16 teams)					
Teams	Average fouls committed per match	Average fouls suffered per match	Yellow cards	Average yellow cards per match	Red cards
Dnipro	18.07	16.47	56	3.73	1
Dinamo Moskva	15.6	11.8	25	2.5	2
Torino	14	13.1	25	2.5	1
Ajax	14	16.25	4	1	1
Villarreal	14	9.8	24	2.4	1
Dynamo Kyiv	13.83	13.42	33	2.75	4
Sevilla	13.67	14.47	34	2.27	1
Zenit	13.5	13.17	21	3.5	0
Beşiktaş	13	15.1	20	2	2
Club Brugge	12.67	12.25	19	1.58	0
Napoli	12.14	11.79	11	0.79	0
Inter	11.6	13.7	19	1.9	1
Everton	11.4	10.8	15	1.5	1
Fiorentina	10.93	11.79	28	2	1
Wolfsburg	10.5	11.67	17	1.42	1
Roma	9.25	14.5	9	2.25	1

Technical observers' selection

All-star squad

The two finalists provided 11 players for the UEFA Europa League squad of the season

One of the tasks of the UEFA technical observers' group, meeting in Warsaw on the morning after Sevilla FC's triumph, was to select their UEFA Europa League squad of the season – and not surprisingly, the winning club featured prominently.


The technical observers chose players who had made significant contributions over the entire campaign and Sevilla's quality across the pitch meant that seven of their players were chosen in the 18-man squad, including Éver Banega, man of the match in the final, and Carlos Bacca, scorer of seven goals – two in the final.

FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk's impressive feat in finishing runners-up meant the inclusion of a quartet of their players – among them the inspirational playmaker Yevhen Konoplyanka.


SSC Napoli shone before losing a tightly contested semi-final to Dnipro and their quality was reflected in the selection of four of their players, including Faouzi Ghoulam – one of the competition's best attacking wing-backs.

In total six clubs were represented, with midfielder Borja Valero of the other losing semi-finalists, ACF Fiorentina, earning a place along with Kevin De Bruyne from quarter-finalists VfL Wolfsburg. For the second year running there was also a spot for the FC Salzburg player who finished top of the goals chart – in 2014 it was Jonathan Soriano; this time it was Brazilian forward Alan, the season's joint top scorer.

Goalkeepers



Denys Boyko



Sergio Rico

Defenders




Timothée Kolodziejczak



Raúl Albiol



Aleix Vidal




Douglas



Faouzi Ghoulam

Midfielders




Borja Valero



Kevin De Bruyne



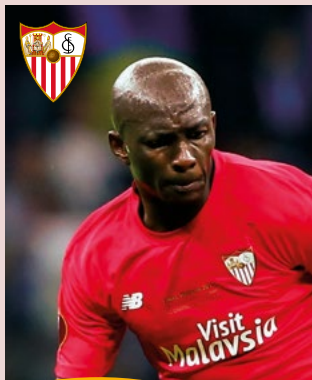
Grzegorz Krychowiak



Ruslan Rotan



Éver Banega



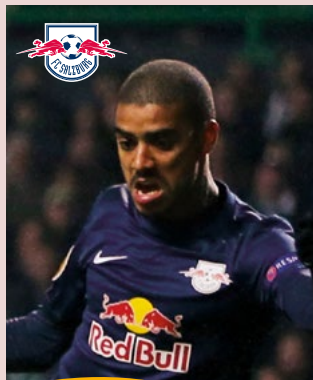
Stéphane Mbia




Marek Hamšík

52.9
Minutes per goal for joint leading scorer Alan

Forwards



Alan



Carlos Bacca



Gonzalo Higuaín



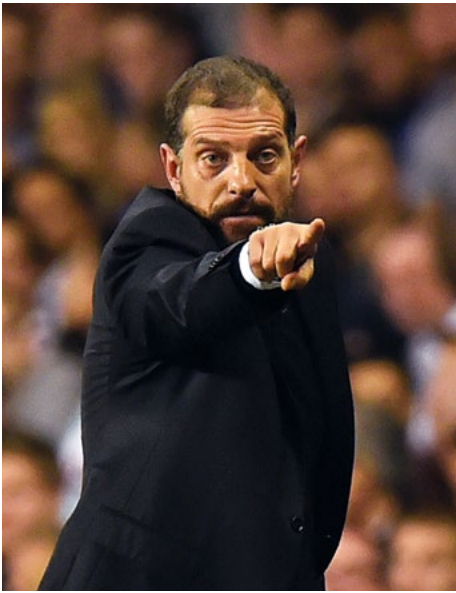
Yevhen Konoplyanka

1,380
Most minutes played, by Dnipro ever-presents Denys Boyko and Douglas

Group stage

195

Total number of sides, including qualifying, that competed in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League.



Clockwise from right: Beşiktaş coach Slaven Bilić; Rijeka's Kantrida ground; Valtteri Moren celebrates scoring HJK's winner against Torino

11 Minutes it took Steaua's Claudiu Keșerü (right) to register the competition's fastest ever hat-trick, against AaB on matchday one.



1 Debutants Qarabağ (below) became the first Azerbaijani club to win a UEFA group stage match by beating Dnipro on matchday three.



Group stage

Group A	P	W	D	L	Pts
VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach	6	3	3	0	12
Villarreal CF	6	3	2	1	11
FC Zürich	6	2	1	3	7
Apollon Limassol FC	6	1	0	5	3

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Borussia	1 - 1	Villarreal
18/09	Apollon	3 - 2	Zürich
02/10	Zürich	1 - 1	Borussia
02/10	Villarreal	4 - 0	Apollon
23/10	Villarreal	4 - 1	Zürich
23/10	Borussia	5 - 0	Apollon
06/11	Zürich	3 - 2	Villarreal
06/11	Apollon	0 - 2	Borussia
27/11	Villarreal	2 - 2	Borussia
27/11	Zürich	3 - 1	Apollon
11/12	Botussia	3 - 0	Zürich
11/12	Apollon	0 - 2	Villarreal

Group B	P	W	D	L	Pts
Club Brugge KV	6	3	3	0	12
Torino FC	6	3	2	1	11
HJK Helsinki	6	2	0	4	6
FC København	6	1	1	4	4

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Club Brugge	0 - 0	Torino
18/09	København	2 - 0	HJK
02/10	Torino	1 - 0	København
02/10	HJK	0 - 3	Club Brugge
23/10	Torino	2 - 0	HJK
23/10	Club Brugge	1 - 1	København
06/11	København	0 - 4	Club Brugge
06/11	HJK	2 - 1	Torino
27/11	Torino	0 - 0	Club Brugge
27/11	HJK	2 - 1	København
11/12	Club Brugge	2 - 1	HJK
11/12	København	1 - 5	Torino

Group C	P	W	D	L	Pts
Beşiktaş JK	6	3	3	0	12
Tottenham Hotspur FC	6	3	2	1	11
Asteras Tripolis FC	6	1	3	2	6
FK Partizan	6	0	2	4	2

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Partizan	0 - 0	Tottenham
18/09	Beşiktaş	1 - 1	Asteras
02/10	Tottenham	1 - 1	Beşiktaş
02/10	Asteras	2 - 0	Partizan
23/10	Tottenham	5 - 1	Asteras
23/10	Partizan	0 - 4	Beşiktaş
06/11	Asteras	1 - 2	Tottenham
06/11	Beşiktaş	2 - 1	Partizan
27/11	Tottenham	1 - 0	Partizan
27/11	Asteras	2 - 2	Beşiktaş
11/12	Partizan	0 - 0	Asteras
11/12	Beşiktaş	1 - 0	Tottenham

Group G	P	W	D	L	Pts
Feyenoord	6	4	0	2	12
Sevilla FC	6	3	2	1	11
HNK Rijeka	6	2	1	3	7
R. Standard de Liège	6	1	1	4	4

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Standard	2 - 0	Rijeka
18/09	Sevilla	2 - 0	Feyenoord
02/10	Feyenoord	2 - 1	Standard
02/10	Rijeka	2 - 2	Sevilla
23/10	Rijeka	3 - 1	Feyenoord
23/10	Standard	0 - 0	Sevilla
06/11	Feyenoord	2 - 0	Rijeka
06/11	Sevilla	3 - 1	Standard
27/11	Rijeka	2 - 0	Standard
27/11	Feyenoord	2 - 0	Sevilla
11/12	Standard	0 - 3	Feyenoord
11/12	Sevilla	1 - 0	Rijeka

Group H	P	W	D	L	Pts
Everton FC	6	3	2	1	11
VfL Wolfsburg	6	3	1	2	10
FC Krasnodar	6	1	3	2	6
LOSC Lille	6	0	4	2	4

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Everton	4 - 1	Wolfsburg
18/09	LOSC	1 - 1	Krasnodar
02/10	Wolfsburg	1 - 1	LOSC
02/10	Krasnodar	1 - 1	Everton
23/10	LOSC	0 - 0	Everton
23/10	Krasnodar	2 - 4	Wolfsburg
06/11	Everton	3 - 0	LOSC
06/11	Wolfsburg	5 - 1	Krasnodar
27/11	Wolfsburg	0 - 2	Everton
27/11	Krasnodar	1 - 1	LOSC
11/12	Everton	0 - 1	Krasnodar
11/12	LOSC	0 - 3	Wolfsburg

Group I	P	W	D	L	Pts
SSC Napoli	6	4	1	1	13
BSC Young Boys	6	4	0	2	12
AC Sparta Praha	6	3	1	2	10
ŠK Slovan Bratislava	6	0	0	6	0

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Young Boys	5 - 0	Bratislava
18/09	Napoli	3 - 1	Sparta Praha
02/10	Sparta Praha	3 - 1	Young Boys
02/10	Bratislava	0 - 2	Napoli
23/10	Bratislava	0 - 3	Sparta Praha
23/10	Young Boys	2 - 0	Napoli
06/11	Sparta Praha	4 - 0	Bratislava
06/11	Napoli	3 - 0	Young Boys
27/11	Bratislava	1 - 3	Young Boys
27/11	Sparta Praha	0 - 0	Napoli
11/12	Young Boys	2 - 0	Sparta Praha
11/12	Napoli	3 - 0	Bratislava

Group D	P	W	D	L	Pts
FC Salzburg	6	5	1	0	16
Celtic FC	6	2	2	2	8
GNK Dinamo Zagreb	6	2	0	4	6
FC Astra Giurgiu	6	1	1	4	4

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Salzburg	2 - 2	Celtic
18/09	Dinamo Zagreb	5 - 1	Astra
02/10	Celtic	1 - 0	Dinamo Zagreb
02/10	Astra	1 - 2	Salzburg
23/10	Celtic	2 - 1	Astra
23/10	Salzburg	4 - 2	Dinamo Zagreb
06/11	Dinamo Zagreb	1 - 5	Salzburg
06/11	Astra	1 - 1	Celtic
27/11	Celtic	1 - 3	Salzburg
27/11	Astra	1 - 0	Dinamo Zagreb
11/12	Salzburg	5 - 1	Astra
11/12	Dinamo Zagreb	4 - 3	Celtic

Group E	P	W	D	L	Pts
FC Dinamo Moskva	6	6	0	0	18
PSV Eindhoven	6	2	2	2	8
Estoril Praia	6	1	2	3	5
Panathinaikos FC	6	0	2	4	2

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	PSV	1 - 0	Estoril
18/09	Panathinaikos	1 - 2	Dinamo Moskva
02/10	Dinamo Moskva	1 - 0	PSV
02/10	Estoril	2 - 0	Panathinaikos
23/10	Estoril	1 - 2	Dinamo Moskva
23/10	PSV	1 - 1	Panathinaikos
06/11	Dinamo Moskva	1 - 0	Estoril
06/11	Panathinaikos	2 - 3	PSV
27/11	Dinamo Moskva	2 - 1	Panathinaikos
28/11	Estoril	3 - 3	PSV
11/12	PSV	0 - 1	Dinamo Moskva
11/12	Panathinaikos	1 - 1	Estoril

Group F	P	W	D	L	Pts
FC Internazionale Milano	6	3	3	0	12
FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk	6	2	1	3	7
Qarabağ FK	6	1	3	2	6
AS Saint-Étienne	6	0	5	1	5

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Dnipro	0 - 1	Inter
18/09	Qarabağ	0 - 0	St-Étienne
02/10	St-Étienne	0 - 0	Dnipro
02/10	Inter	2 - 0	Qarabağ
23/10	Inter	0 - 0	St-Étienne
23/10	Dnipro	0 - 1	Qarabağ
06/11	St-Étienne	1 - 1	Inter
06/11	Qarabağ	1 - 2	Dnipro
27/11	Inter	2 - 1	Dnipro
27/11	St-Étienne	1 - 1	Qarabağ
11/12	Dnipro	1 - 0	St-Étienne
11/12	Qarabağ	0 - 0	Inter

Group J	P	W	D	L	Pts
FC Dynamo Kyiv	6	5	0	1	15
Aalborg BK	6	3	0	3	9
FC Steaua București	6	2	1	3	7
Rio Ave FC	6	1	1	4	4

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Rio Ave	0 - 3	Dynamo Kyiv
18/09	Steaua	6 - 0	AaB
02/10	AaB	1 - 0	Rio Ave
02/10	Dynamo Kyiv	3 - 1	Steaua
23/10	AaB	3 - 0	Dynamo Kyiv
23/10	Steaua	2 - 1	Rio Ave
06/11	Rio Ave	2 - 2	Steaua
06/11	Dynamo Kyiv	2 - 0	AaB
27/11	AaB	1 - 0	Steaua
27/11	Dynamo Kyiv	2 - 0	Rio Ave
11/12	Rio Ave	2 - 0	AaB
11/12	Steaua	0 - 2	Dynamo Kyiv

Group K	P	W	D	L	Pts
ACF Fiorentina	6	4	1	1	13
EA Guingamp	6	3	1	2	10
PAOK FC	6	2	1	3	7
FC Dinamo Minsk	6	1	1	4	4

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Fiorentina	3 - 0	Guingamp
18/09	PAOK	6 - 1	Dinamo Minsk
02/10	Guingamp	2 - 0	PAOK
02/10	Dinamo Minsk	0 - 3	Fiorentina
23/10	Dinamo Minsk	0 - 0	Guingamp
23/10	PAOK	0 - 1	Fiorentina
06/11	Guingamp	2 - 0	Dinamo Minsk
06/11	Fiorentina	1 - 1	PAOK
27/11	Guingamp	1 - 2	Fiorentina
27/11	Dinamo Minsk	0 - 2	PAOK
11/12	Fiorentina	1 - 2	Dinamo Minsk
11/12	PAOK	1 - 2	Guingamp

Group L	P	W	D	L	Pts
Legia Warszawa	6	5	0	1	15
Trabzonspor AŞ	6	3	1	2	10
KSC Lokeren OV	6	3	1	2	10
FC Metalist Kharkiv	6	0	0	6	0

Date	Home	Score	Away
18/09	Legia	1 - 0	Lokeren
18/09	Metalist	1 - 2	Trabzonspor
02/10	Lokeren	1 - 0	Metalist
02/10	Trabzonspor	0 - 1	Legia
22/10	Metalist	0 - 1	Legia
23/10	Trabzonspor	2 - 0	Lokeren
06/11	Lokeren	1 - 1	Trabzonspor
06/11	Legia	2 - 1	Metalist
27/11	Lokeren	1 - 0	Legia
27/11	Trabzonspor	3 - 1	Metalist
11/12	Legia	2 - 0	Trabzonspor
11/12	Metalist	0 - 1	Lokeren

Knockout stage

5

Italy provided a record number of participants in the last 16, with Fiorentina, Inter, Napoli, Roma and Torino all progressing.



11

Quarter-finalists Club Brugge went a record 11 matches unbeaten from the start of the group stage (15 including qualifying).



Clockwise from left: Torino's Fabio Quagliarella; Ajax's Arkadiusz Milik on target against Legia; Club Brugge saw off Beşiktaş in the round of 16; Kyiv take on Everton



Clockwise from bottom left: Fiorentina's Nenad Tomović takes on Jeremain Lens of Dynamo Kyiv; Napoli's Marek Hamšík; veterans José Antonio Reyes and Joaquín; winning coach Unai Emery; Dnipro's semi-final hero Yevhen Seleznyov



50

Sevilla coach Unai Emery took charge of his 50th UEFA Europa League fixture in Warsaw – the most by any coach in the competition.



Round of 32				19 and 26 February			
Young Boys	1 - 4	Everton		Liverpool	1 - 0	Beşiktaş	
Everton	3 - 1	Young Boys		Beşiktaş	1 - 0	Liverpool	
Everton win 7-2 on aggregate				Aggregate 1-1 aet; Beşiktaş win 5-4 on penalties			
Torino	2 - 2	Athletic		Tottenham	1 - 1	Fiorentina	
Athletic	2 - 3	Torino		Fiorentina	2 - 0	Tottenham	
Torino win 5-4 on aggregate				Fiorentina win 3-1 on aggregate			
Wolfsburg	2 - 0	Sporting		Celtic	3 - 3	Inter	
Sporting	0 - 0	Wolfsburg		Inter	1 - 0	Celtic	
Wolfsburg win 2-0 on aggregate				Inter win 4-3 on aggregate			
Aalborg	1 - 3	Club Brugge		Sevilla	1 - 0	Borussia	
Club Brugge	3 - 0	Aalborg		Borussia	2 - 3	Sevilla FC	
Club Brugge win 6-1 on aggregate				Sevilla win 4-2 on aggregate			
Roma	1 - 1	Feyenoord		Ajax	1 - 0	Legia	
Feyenoord	1 - 2	Roma		Legia	0 - 3	Ajax	
Roma win 3-2 on aggregate				Ajax win 4-0 on aggregate			
PSV	0 - 1	Zenit		Anderlecht	0 - 0	Dinamo Moskva	
Zenit	3 - 0	PSV		Dinamo Moskva	3 - 1	Anderlecht	
Zenit win 4-0 on aggregate				Dinamo Moskva win 3-1 on aggregate			
Dnipro	2 - 0	Olympiacos		Guingamp	2 - 1	Dynamo Kyiv	
Olympiacos	2 - 2	Dnipro		Dynamo Kyiv	3 - 1	Guingamp	
Dnipro win 4-2 on aggregate				Dynamo Kyiv win 4-3 on aggregate			
Trabzonspor	0 - 4	Napoli		Villarreal	2 - 1	Salzburg	
Napoli	1 - 0	Trabzonspor		Salzburg	1 - 3	Villarreal	
Napoli win 5-0 on aggregate				Villarreal win 5-2 on aggregate			

Round of 16				12 and 19 March			
Wolfsburg	3 - 1	Inter		Wolfsburg	3 - 1	Inter	
Inter	1 - 2	Wolfsburg		Inter	1 - 2	Wolfsburg	
Wolfsburg win 5-2 on aggregate				Wolfsburg win 5-2 on aggregate			
Club Brugge	2 - 1	Beşiktaş		Club Brugge	2 - 1	Beşiktaş	
Beşiktaş	1 - 3	Club Brugge		Beşiktaş	1 - 3	Club Brugge	
Club Brugge win 5-2 on aggregate				Club Brugge win 5-2 on aggregate			
Dnipro	1 - 0	Ajax		Dnipro	1 - 0	Ajax	
Ajax	2 - 1	Dnipro		Ajax	2 - 1	Dnipro	
Aggregate 2-2 aet; Dnipro win on away goals				Aggregate 2-2 aet; Dnipro win on away goals			
Zenit	2 - 0	Torino		Zenit	2 - 0	Torino	
Torino	1 - 0	Zenit		Torino	1 - 0	Zenit	
Zenit win 2-1 on aggregate				Zenit win 2-1 on aggregate			
Everton	2 - 1	Dynamo Kyiv		Everton	2 - 1	Dynamo Kyiv	
Dynamo Kyiv	5 - 2	Everton		Dynamo Kyiv	5 - 2	Everton	
Dynamo Kyiv win 6-4 on aggregate				Dynamo Kyiv win 6-4 on aggregate			
Villarreal	1 - 3	Sevilla		Villarreal	1 - 3	Sevilla	
Sevilla	2 - 1	Villarreal		Sevilla	2 - 1	Villarreal	
Sevilla win 5-2 on aggregate				Sevilla win 5-2 on aggregate			
Napoli	3 - 1	Dinamo Moskva		Napoli	3 - 1	Dinamo Moskva	
Dinamo Moskva	0 - 0	Napoli		Dinamo Moskva	0 - 0	Napoli	
Napoli win 3-1 on aggregate				Napoli win 3-1 on aggregate			
Fiorentina	1 - 1	Roma		Fiorentina	1 - 1	Roma	
Roma	0 - 3	Fiorentina		Roma	0 - 3	Fiorentina	
Fiorentina win 4-1 on aggregate				Fiorentina win 4-1 on aggregate			

Quarter-finals				16 and 23 April			
Sevilla	2 - 1	Zenit		Sevilla	2 - 1	Zenit	
Zenit	2 - 2	Sevilla		Zenit	2 - 2	Sevilla	
Sevilla win 4-3 on aggregate				Sevilla win 4-3 on aggregate			
Club Brugge	0 - 0	Dnipro		Club Brugge	0 - 0	Dnipro	
Dnipro	1 - 0	Club Brugge		Dnipro	1 - 0	Club Brugge	
Dnipro win 1-0 on aggregate				Dnipro win 1-0 on aggregate			
Wolfsburg	1 - 4	Napoli		Wolfsburg	1 - 4	Napoli	
Napoli	2 - 2	Wolfsburg		Napoli	2 - 2	Wolfsburg	
Napoli win 6-3 on aggregate				Napoli win 6-3 on aggregate			
Dynamo Kyiv	1 - 1	Fiorentina		Dynamo Kyiv	1 - 1	Fiorentina	
Fiorentina	2 - 0	Dynamo Kyiv		Fiorentina	2 - 0	Dynamo Kyiv	
Fiorentina win 3-1 on aggregate				Fiorentina win 3-1 on aggregate			

Semi-finals				7 and 14 May			
Napoli	1 - 1	Dnipro		Napoli	1 - 1	Dnipro	
Dnipro	1 - 0	Napoli		Dnipro	1 - 0	Napoli	
Dnipro win 2-1 on aggregate				Dnipro win 2-1 on aggregate			
Sevilla	3 - 0	Fiorentina		Sevilla	3 - 0	Fiorentina	
Fiorentina	0 - 2	Sevilla		Fiorentina	0 - 2	Sevilla	
Sevilla win 5-0 on aggregate				Sevilla win 5-0 on aggregate			

Final				27 May			
Dnipro	2 - 3	Sevilla		Dnipro	2 - 3	Sevilla	

Team profiles (last 16)

AFC Ajax Netherlands



	G	A	PSG	APO	BAR	BAR	PSG	APO	LEG	LEG	DNI	DNI
	UCL/UEL	UCL/UEL	D 1-1	D 1-1	L 3-1	L 0-2	L 3-1	W 4-0	W 1-0	W 0-3	L 1-0	W 2-1*
Goalkeepers												
22	Jasper Cillessen		90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	120
33	Diederik Boer		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Defenders												
2	Ricardo van Rhijn		90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	120
3	Joël Veltman	0/1	90	90	90	71↓	5	90	72↓	90	120	
4	Niklas Moisander		90	90	90	90	0	90	0	0	0	0
5	Nicolai Boilesen		90	90		90	10↓		90	90	90	100↓
6	Mike van der Hoorn	0/1	0				90	0	90	18↑	0	20↑so
12	Jairo Riedewald				34↑	18↑	0	22↑	19↑	0		0
23	Kenny Tete								0			
24	Stefano Denswil		0	0	0	10↑	90	0				
26	Nick Viergever	0/1	45↓	90	90	0	80↑	90	90	90	90	120
Midfielders												
8	Daley Sinkgraven		0	0	0				8↑	45↑	30↑	87↓
10	Davy Klaassen	2/0	1/0	90	90	90	90	90	82↓	45↓	90	120
16	Lucas Andersen	1/0		90	74↓	90	72↓	90	68↓		11↑	0
25	Thulani Serero			90	90		80↓	69↓	90	71↓	90	60↓
27	Riechedly Bazoer	0/1						0	90	90	90	120
32	Niki Zimling		45↑	0	56↓	0	21↑					
Forwards												
9	Kolbeinn Sigthórsson	0/1	61↓	90	73↓	62↓	0					42↑
11	Ricardo Kishna	2/2		16↑	45↓	0	90	90	74↓	79↓	29↑	78↓
19	Arkadiusz Milik	1/3	2/0	8↑	0	45↑	28↑	90	85↓	90	90	77↓
20	Lasse Schöne	3/0	1/0	82↓	74↓	90	90	90	75↓	16↑	0	61↓
21	Anwar El Ghazi	1/0		29↑	16↑	17↑	90	0	15↑	90	90	90
30	Richairo Zivkovic							5↑	0			13↑
34	Queensy Menig					0						

*agg 2-2 aet; lost on away goals
Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away; yellow background indicates games played in the UEFA Champions League group stage

KEY FEATURES

- Classic Dutch starting formation of 1-4-3-3
 - No10 Klaassen at base of midfield trio, collecting ball from defence and building moves
 - Excellent short passing game with options for man in possession
- Impressive use of width, with adventurous full-backs Van Rhijn and Boilesen
 - El Ghazi dangerous winger, cutting in from flank, strong in 1v1s
 - Good ball control; assured combination plays
- Dangerous set-piece delivery (Milik, Sinkgraven, Schöne)
 - Defensive resilience and good organisation
 - Well-balanced side, with rotation of players during game
 - Players with athleticism and ability to run with ball

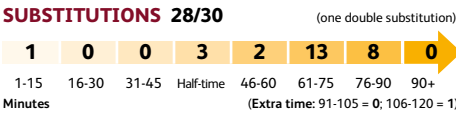
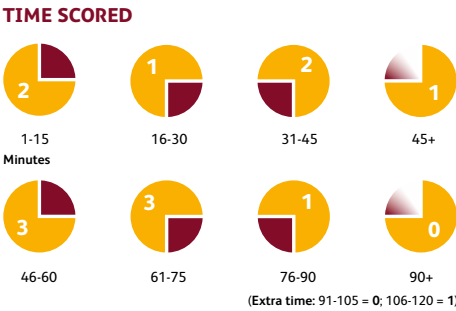


STATISTICS

Including UEFA Champions League group stage games



GOAL ATTEMPTS
106 (37 on target) = 10.6 (3.7) per game



AVERAGES

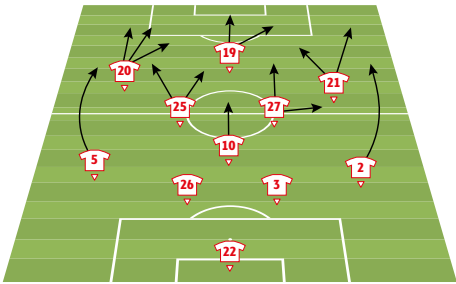
UEFA Europa League games only

POSSESSION 57%
Max: 65% v Legia (h) | Min: 54% v Legia (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 544
Max: 575 v Legia (h) | Min: 514 v Legia (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 88%
Max: 90% v Dnipro (a), Legia (h) | Min: 86% v Legia (a)
Data for matchday ten v Dnipro (h) changed pro rata to 90-minute values to facilitate comparisons.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Frank de Boer
Born: 15/05/1970, Hoorn (NED)
Nationality: Dutch
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 14
Matches in European club competition:** 39
Head coach since: 06/12/2010

Beşiktaş JK Turkey



	G	A	AT	TOT	PAR	PAR	AT	TOT	LIV	LIV	BRU	BRU
	D 1-1	D 1-1	W 0-4	W 2-1	D 2-2	W 1-0	L 1-0	W 1-0*	L 2-1	L 1-3		
Goalkeepers												
1	Cenk Gönen		0	0	0	90	90		90	120	90	0
29	Tolga Zengin		90	90	90		90		0	0	0	90
41	Enes Fidayeo											
99	Emre Metin				0	0	0					
Defenders												
2	Serdar Kurtuluş			90		90	90	90	90	120	90	
3	İsmail Köybaşı		0	0	12↑	90	0	6↑				
6	Tomáš Sivok		90	90	90	90			90	120	0	90
19	Pedro Franco		90	90	90	90	90	90	90	120	0	90
22	Ersan Gülüm			0	0	0	90	45↓	90		90	0
28	Ümit Karaal						0					
31	Ramon Motta	1	90	90	90	90	90	90	0	0	0	90
33	Atınç Nukan		0		0	0	45↑		0	0	0	0
44	Daniel Opare								0	120	90	71↓
54	Tugay Kaya						0					
Midfielders												
5	José Sosa		21↑	90		20↑	72↓	90	60↓	61↓		
7	Gökhan Töre	4	4	90	82↓	64↓	90↓	86↓	84↓	90	120	90
8	Veli Kavlak	1		90	65↓	90	90	90		90	120	90
13	Atiba Hutchinson			90	90	90	90	72↓so	S	90	120	0
15	Oğuzhan Özyakup	1	1	69↓	25↑	78↓	70↓	18↑	30↑	0	73↓	0
18	Tolgay Arslan	1							0	59↑	90	90
20	Necip Uysal			90	0	90	1↑	4↑	90	0	120	90
21	Kerim Frei		5↑	8↑	26↑	0	26↑	90↓	18↑	15↑	17↑	19↑
25	Uğur Boral				0				0			
Forwards												
9	Demba Ba	5	2	0	90	69↓	90	90	90	120	90	90
10	Olcay Şahan		2	85↓	72↓	90	58↓	64↓	90	72↓	105↓	83↓
11	Mustafa Pektemek			30↓	18↑		32↑	0		0	0	7↑
14	Furkan Yaman								1↑			74↓
23	Cenk Tosun	1		60↑		21↑	0		90		0	16↑

*agg 1-1 aet; won 5-4 on pens
Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

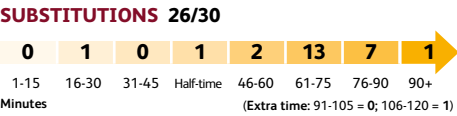
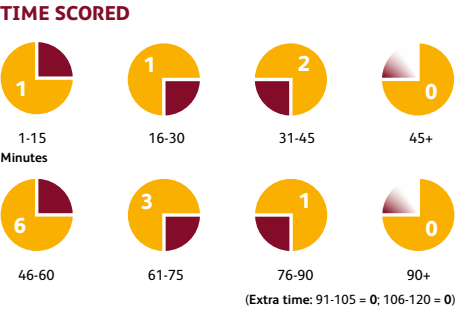
KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-4-2 at home, switching to 1-4-5-1 out of possession; 1-4-3-3 away from home
 - Patient build-up with Veli Kavlak dropping back to collect ball from centre-backs
 - High defensive line; players pressing the ball in midfield
 - Attack using width of pitch, with effective use of full-backs
- Good organisation and influential individuals, able to conjure quick transitions
 - Right winger Gökhan Töre especially dangerous: dribbling skills in 1v1 situations
 - Plenty of positional movement and passing options for man in possession
- Centre-forward Demba Ba brings experience, finishing ability and clever movement
 - Tenacity and resilience; unbeaten in group stage
 - Strong motivation with 60,000-plus home crowds for knockout ties in Istanbul

STATISTICS



GOAL ATTEMPTS
122 (44 on target) = 12.2 (4.4) per game



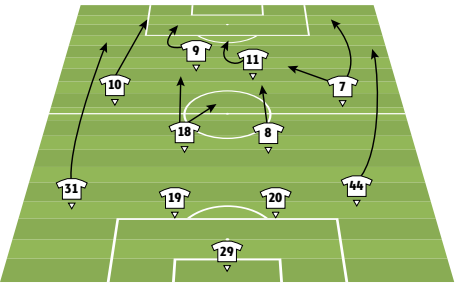
AVERAGES*

POSSESSION 54%
Max: 64% v Asteras (h) | Min: 38% v Tottenham (h)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 444
Max: 544 v Partizan (a) | Min: 257 v Liverpool (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 87%
Max: 93% v Partizan (a) | Min: 73% v Tottenham (a)
*Excluding matchday five v Asteras (a) when playing 18 minutes with ten men.
Data for matchday eight v Liverpool (h) changed pro rata to 90-minute values to facilitate comparisons.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Slaven Bilić
Born: 11/09/1968, Split (CRO)
Nationality: Croatian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 11
Matches in European club competition:** 16
Head coach since: 28/06/2013

Team profiles (last 16)

Club Brugge KV

Belgium



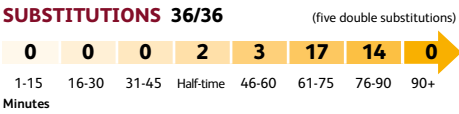
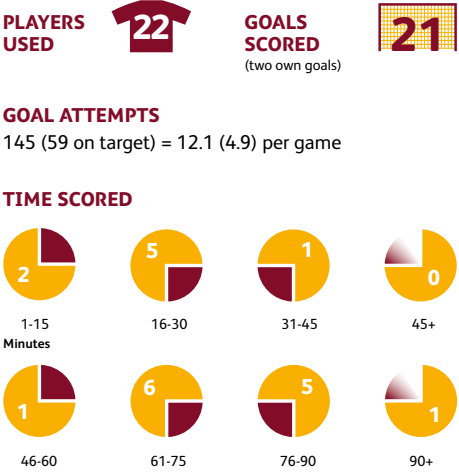
	G	A	TOR	HJK	KOB	KOB	TOR	HJK	AAB	AAB	BES	BES	DNI	DNI
	D 0-0	W 0-3	D 1-1	W 0-4	D 0-0	W 2-1	W 1-3	W 3-0	W 2-1	W 1-3	D 0-0	L 1-0		
Goalkeepers														
1 Mathew Ryan			90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
13 Sokratis Dioudis			0	0	0	0	0							
33 Vladan Kujović									0	0	0	0	0	0
Defenders														
2 Davy de Fauw			0	0	90	90	0	90	90	90	61↓	60↓	90	90
4 Oscar Duarte			90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90		90
19 Thomas Meunier			90	90	0	90	90	90	78↓	90	90			
28 Laurens De Bock	1		10↑	90	90	90		0	12↑	90	90	90	90	90
40 Björn Engels			0	0										
44 Brandon Mechele			90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
53 Dario van den Buijs						0						0	0	
54 Gauthier Libbrecht												0		
63 Boli Bolingoli-Mbombo	3	1	80↓	0		0		90	90	45↓	25↑			
Midfielders														
3 Timmy Simons		1	90	16↑	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
5 Francisco Silva			90	90	79↓	0	63↓	33↑	15↑	0	0	90	0	
6 Fernando			66↓	90	0	25↑	90	71↓						
7 Víctor Vázquez	2		66↓	74↓	90	65↓	63↓	19↑	22↑	75↓		90	4↑	
8 Lior Refaelov	6	4		90	34↑	90	27↑	19↑	80↓	90	90	89↓	90	
25 Ruud Vormer	1		24↑		0	90	27↑	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
43 Sander Coopman							71↓					1↑	0	
57 Yannick Reuten									0	0		0		
Forwards														
9 Tom De Sutter	3	2		25↑	21↑	45↓	2↑	79↓	10↑	0	87↓	81↓	18↑	70↓
17 Waldemar Sobota					56↓	13↑								
18 Felipe Gedeo	1	2	90	81↓	90	77↓	90	90	57↓		45↑	30↑		
22 José Izquierdo			90	9↑	11↑	0	0	0				65↓	78↓	86↓
30 Nicolas Castillo	1				69↓	45↑	88↓	0						
42 Nikola Storm			24↑				0	90	0	0	0	0	86↓	
45 Tuur Dierckx							0	15↑	3↑	0	12↑	4↑		
58 Obbi Oularé	2	2	0	65↓			11↑	68↓	75↓	29↑	9↑	72↓	20↑	

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1 but also used 1-5-4-1
 - Compact defence; good discipline and organisation
 - Strong in the air in both penalty boxes; set-piece threat
 - Deep defence, supported by experienced pivot Simons
 - Counterattack well, with game-opening diagonal balls
- Ability to rotate positions; clever movement with mobile wingers
 - Right-back Meunier provides attacking threat with overlapping runs
 - Creative players, providing good links between midfield and attack: Refaelov, Vormer
- Tall target man (De Sutter, Oularé) able to hold ball up
 - Hard work, determination and team spirit in 15-game unbeaten run in competition

STATISTICS



AVERAGES

POSSESSION 49%
Max: 56% v AaB (h) | Min: 40% v Beşiktaş (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 385
Max: 565 v AaB (h) | Min: 274 v Torino (h)

PASSING ACCURACY 84%
Max: 90% v AaB (h) | Min: 78% v Beşiktaş (h)

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Michel Preud'homme
Born: 24/01/1959, Ougree (BEL)
Nationality: Belgian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 25
Matches in European club competition:** 45
Head coach since: 20/09/2013

FC Dinamo Moskva

Russia



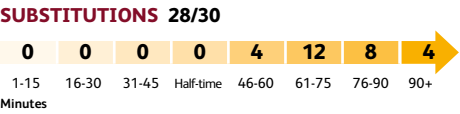
	G	A	PAN	PSV	EST	EST	PAN	PSV	AND	AND	NAP	NAP
	W 1-2	W 1-0	W 1-2	W 1-0	W 2-1	W 0-1	D 0-0	W 3-1	L 3-1	D 0-0		
Goalkeepers												
1 Anton Shunin			0		0		0				0	0
21 Roman Berezovski				0		0						
30 Vladimir Gabulov			90	90	90	90	90	0	90	90	90	90
Defenders												
3 Alexander Büttner			69↓	90	90	90	90		75↓so	S	28↑	85↓
4 Christopher Samba	1		90	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90
5 Douglas			90	90	90	90	90		90	0	37↑	0
13 Vladimir Granat			21↑		0						0	0
15 Tomáš Hubočan			1↑	90		90	0	90	90	90	90	90
23 Stanislav Manolev			90	0		0	90					
25 Aleksei Kozlov	1				90	0	0	90	90	53↓	90	90
28 Boris Rotenberg			0	0	1↑	0	90	0	0	0	0	0
45 Artem Yarmolitski							0					
81 Egor Danilkin											0	0
Midfielders												
6 William Vainqueur		2		90	90	90	90	59↓	90	90	90	90
7 Balázs Dzsudzsák		2	90	61↓	0	76↓	9↑	90↓	69↓	68↓	90↓	90
8 Artur Yusupov	1		90	90	0	4↑	17↑	90	90	90	0	0
11 Aleksei Ionov	3		90	73↓	56↓	90	81↓	31↑	10↑	22↑	18↑	5↑
14 Mathieu Valbuena		1		17↑	90↓	86↓	90	90	80↓	84↓	72↓	90
16 Christian Noboa		2	90	68↓	90	90	90					
18 Yuri Zhirkov	2	1		29↑	34↑	14↑	73↓		21↑	90	90	90
27 Igor Denisov					90	90			39↑	90		
47 Roman Zobnin			0	0					0	0	46↓so	S
77 Anatoli Katrich											0	
88 Aleksandr Tashaev			0						1↑		0	1↑
Forwards												
9 Aleksandr Kokorin	2	1	89↓	90	75↓	74↓		90	90	90	90	90
22 Kevin Kuranyi	3	1	90↓	22↑	15↑	16↑	88↓	68↓	51↓	6↑	62↓	90
99 Aleksandr Prudnikov			1↑		0	2↑	22↑					

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-4-2, with Vainqueur the midfield pivot
 - Athletic, hard-working team, strong in air
 - Use of long balls to forwards Kokorin and Kuranyi
 - Disciplined, well-organised defence marshalled by Samba
- Set-piece expertise of Valbuena; effective corner routines
 - Able to vary approach with patient build-up from back at home
 - Attacking threat from hard-working left-back Büttner
- Influential individuals in midfield (Vainqueur), good technique and passing ability
 - Rapid transition from defence to attack
 - Zhirkov able to run with ball; strong in 1v1s

STATISTICS



AVERAGES*

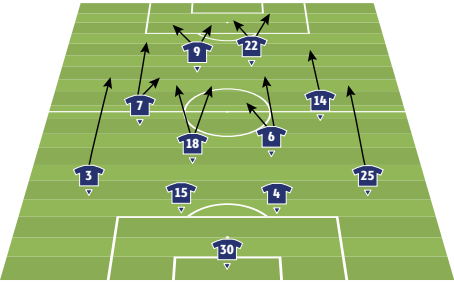
POSSESSION 53%
Max: 58% v Estoril (h) | Min: 47% v PSV (h)*

PASSES ATTEMPTED 365
Max: 431 v Anderlecht (h) | Min: 301 v PSV (h)*

PASSING ACCURACY 88%
Max: 95% v Panathinaikos (h) | Min: 81% v Napoli (h), Anderlecht (a)*

*Excluding matchday nine v Napoli (a) when playing 44 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Stanislav Cherchesov
Born: 02/09/1963, Alagir (RUS)
Nationality: Russian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 18
Matches in European club competition:** 25
Head coach since: 10/04/2014

Team profiles (last 16)

FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk

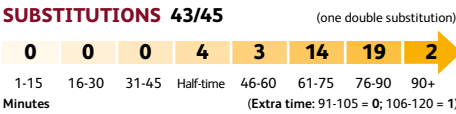
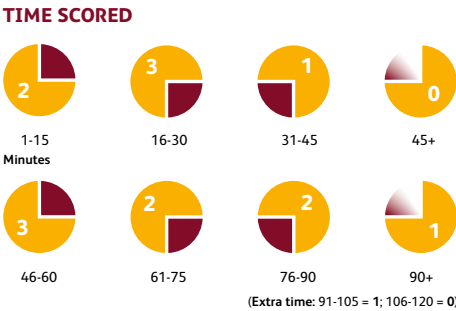
Ukraine



STATISTICS



GOAL ATTEMPTS 172 (77 on target) = 11.5 (5.1) per game



AVERAGES

POSSESSION 45% Max: 60% v Qarabağ (h) | Min: 37% v Napoli (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 305 Max: 502 v Qarabağ (h) | Min: 182 v St-Étienne (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 82% Max: 93% v Internazionale (h) | Min: 70% v Napoli (a)

Data for matchday ten v Ajax (a) changed pro rata to 90-minute values to facilitate comparisons.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



Myron Markevych
Born: 01/02/1951, Vinnyky (UKR)
Nationality: Ukrainian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 52
Matches in European club competition:** 72
Head coach since: 26/05/2014

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

FC Dynamo Kyiv

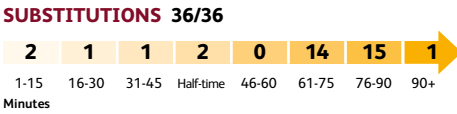
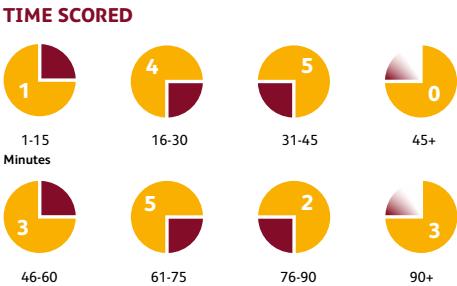
Ukraine



STATISTICS



GOAL ATTEMPTS 152 (75 on target) = 12.7 (6.2) per game



AVERAGES*

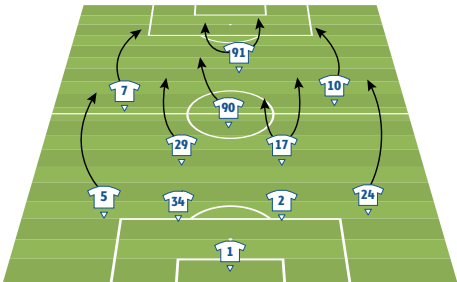
POSSESSION 53% Max: 58% v Rio Ave (h) | Min: 44% v Everton (a)*

PASSES ATTEMPTED 385 Max: 483 v Steaua (a) | Min: 245 v Rio Ave (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 87% Max: 90% v Steaua (h) | Min: 82% v Everton (h)

*Excluding matchday four v AaB (h) when playing 22 minutes with ten men, matchday seven v Guingamp (a) when playing 45 minutes with nine men and matchday 12 v Fiorentina (a) when playing 50 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



Serhiy Rebrov
Born: 03/06/1974, Horlivka (UKR)
Nationality: Ukrainian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 12
Matches in European club competition:** 12
Head coach since: 17/04/2014

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1, transforming to 1-4-4-1-1 and 1-4-4-2 when defending
- Good saves and decision-making by goalkeeper Boyko
- Compact, disciplined defence; centre-backs strong in air (190cm Douglas)
- Solid team organisation; impressive spirit and resilience
- Two screening midfielders; one deep, the other linking midfield and attack
- Konoplyanka the creative heartbeat, pacy right-footed player dribbling infield from left
- Rotan important for leadership, versatility, set-piece ability
- Good transitional play; counterattacking threat
- Use of long ball to hard-working target man (Kalinić, Seleznyov)
- Threat from wide positions, notably through speedy Luchkevych

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1; 1-4-5-1
- Pivot Rybalka able to set tempo with passing from deep
- Important work by Sydorchuk; pushing forward but also strong defensively in 1v1s
- Good use of diagonal balls to open up game
- Defended as a compact unit between 35m line and halfway line
- Rapid counterattacks with quick pass to centre-forward
- Impressive width; wingers a real threat with dribbling skills
- Yarmolenko dangerous across final third, with dribbling, crossing and shooting
- Strong combination play, with good links between the lines
- Impressive finishing ability with excellent long-range goals

Team profiles (last 16)

Everton FC

England



	G	A	WOL W 4-1	KRA D 1-1	LIL D 0-0	LIL W 3-0	WOL W 0-2	KRA L 0-1	YB W 1-4	YB W 3-1	DKV W 2-1	DKV L 5-2
Goalkeepers												
1 Joel Robles			0	0	0	0	0	90	0	0	0	0
24 Tim Howard			90	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90
Defenders												
2 Tony Hibbert				90	90	90	90			0		90
3 Leighton Baines	1	4	90	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90
6 Phil Jagielka	2		90	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90
8 Bryan Oviedo				0				90	58↓			
15 Sylvain Distin					90	90	90					
23 Seamus Coleman	2		90↓		0	0	0		90	90	90	90
26 John Stones			90	90				63↓so		0	0	0
27 Tiyas Browning				0		0	90↓		0	0		
29 Luke Garbutt	1					90	90	32↑	90	90	0	0
30 Antolin Alcaraz			0	0	0		90	21↑	90	90	90	90
50 Gethin Jones							1↑					
Midfielders												
4 Darron Gibson		1	8↑	90	0	23↑			0	90	0	0
7 Aiden McGeady		2	90	90	82↓	66↓	90					
11 Kevin Mirallas	3	1	90			83↓		90	90	64↓		
16 James McCarthy			90		1↑	84↓	31↓	69↓	61↓	90	77↓	
17 Muhamed Bešić			0	0	90	6↑	90	0	29↑	0	13↑	
18 Gareth Barry	2	90	90	90	67↓		90	90	90	90	90	
19 Christian Atsu			0	45↓	8↑	24↓	7↑	11↓	5↑	0	65↓	
20 Ross Barkley	1	1		90↓	0	18↑	90	0	74↓	90		
21 Leon Osman		1↑	90		90	59↑		10↑	16↑	25↑		
22 Steven Pienaar					64↓	0	90					
42 Ryan Ledson							90					
51 Kieran Dowell							79↑					
Forwards												
5 Samuel Eto'o	1	1	21↑	90	90	0	72↓					
9 Arouna Koné						0	90		41↑	26↑	25↑	
10 Romelu Lukaku	8	2	69↓	45↑	26↑	90	90		85↓	49↓	90	90
14 Steven Naismith	2	2	82↓	0		90		80↓	80↓	90	65↓	
35 Conor McAleny							80↓					
41 Christopher Long							10↑					

Russell Griffiths, Jonjoe Kenny, Conor Grant, Joseph Williams and Courtney Duffus were unused substitutes.
Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off;
Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1 with variations including 1-4-3-3 when attacking
 - Possession game, with patient build-up from back
 - Leadership and organisation in defence from Jagielka
 - Press ball in midfield when defending, rather than drop immediately back
- Full-backs pushing forward at same time at home; Barry gives cover to centre-backs
 - Importance of left-back Baines with forward runs and set pieces
 - Quick transitions from defence to attack
 - Naismith hard-working forward behind main striker
- Wide attackers with ability to cut in and threaten in 1v1s (Mirallas)
 - Lukaku leading attack; especially dangerous running onto quick through passes



STATISTICS

PLAYERS USED

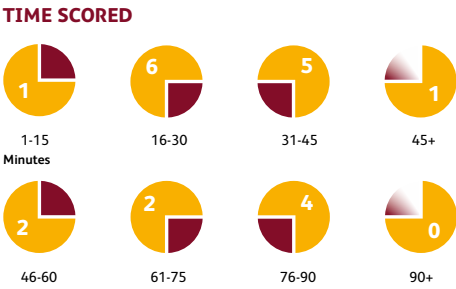
31

GOALS SCORED

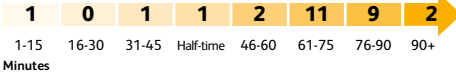
(one own goal)

21

GOAL ATTEMPTS
119 (65 on target) = 11.9 (6.5) per game



SUBSTITUTIONS 27/30 (one double substitution)



AVERAGES*

POSSESSION 52%
Max: 63% v LOSC (h) | Min: 42% v Wolfsburg (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 405
Max: 559 v LOSC (h) | Min: 279 v Dynamo Kyiv (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 88%
Max: 94% v LOSC (h) | Min: 81% v Dynamo Kyiv (a)
*Excluding matchday seven v Young Boys (a) when playing 27 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH

Roberto Martínez
Born: 13/07/1973, Balaguer (ESP)
Nationality: Spanish
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 10
Matches in European club competition:** 10
Head coach since: 05/06/2013

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

ACF Fiorentina

Italy



STATISTICS

PLAYERS USED

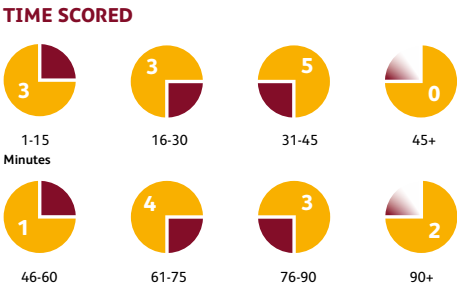
26

GOALS SCORED

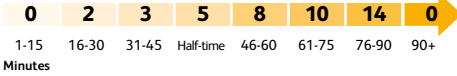
(one own goal)

21

GOAL ATTEMPTS
233 (78 on target) = 16.6 (5.6) per match



SUBSTITUTIONS 42/42



AVERAGES*

POSSESSION 55%
Max: 66% v Guingamp (h) | Min: 39% v Tottenham (h)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 458
Max: 624 v Dinamo Minsk (a) | Min: 251 v Tottenham (h)

PASSING ACCURACY 88%
Max: 95% v Guingamp (h) | Min: 76% v Tottenham (h)
*Excludes matchday five v Guingamp (a) when playing 46 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH

Vincenzo Montella
Born: 18/06/1974, Pomigliano d'Arco (ITA)
Nationality: Italian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 24
Matches in European club competition:** 27
Head coach since: 11/06/2012

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-3-3 with transitions to 1-4-5-1 and 1-4-1-4-1 when defending; also used 1-3-5-2
 - Focus on possession game: good passing and movement, with options for man on ball
 - Attacking approach from full-backs, notably left-back Marcos Alonso
 - Compact defence; good organisation at defensive set pieces
- One defensive midfielder in Badelj; others more technical, forward-looking (Fernández, Valero)
 - Midfield pressing, putting opposition under immediate pressure after losing ball
 - Salah strong in 1v1s; big contribution with energy, speed and dribbling
- Mental strength and determination: six-game unbeaten run in away games
 - Tactically flexible; players with good movement; good links between the lines
 - European experience and knowhow (Joaquín, Pizarro, Gomez)

Team profiles (last 16)

FC Internazionale Milano

Italy



	G	A	DNI	QAR	SET	SET	DNI	QAR	CEL	CEL	WOL	WOL
			W 0-1	W 2-0	D 0-0	D 1-1	W 2-1	D 0-0	D 3-3	W 1-0	L 3-1	L 1-2
Goalkeepers												
1	Samir Handanović		90	0	0	0	90		0	0	0	0
30	Juan Pablo Carrizo		0	90	90	90	0	90	90	90	90	90
Defenders												
2	Jonathan		14↑									
5	Juan		90	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90
6	Marco Andreolli		0	90	90	90	35↑	90			0	
14	Hugo Campagnaro		90				53↑	90	90	9↑	68↓	
15	Nemanja Vidić		90	0	90	90			0	0	32↑	0
21	Davide Santon								90	90	82↓	90
22	Dodô	1	90		90	90	90		11↑		0	
23	Andrea Ranocchia		0	90	0	0	46↑so	5	90	90	90	90
25	Ibrahima Mbaye			0	90	90		90				
33	Daniilo D'Ambrosio	2	90	90				84↓		81↓	90	22↑
54	Isaac Donkor							90				
55	Yuto Nagatomo			90			37↓					
93	Federico Dimarco							6↑				
Midfielders												
10	Mateo Kovačić				90	74↓			15↑	10↑	8↑	55↓
13	Fredy Guarín	1	1	90	63↓	70↓	90		90	90	90	90
17	Zdravko Kuzmanović	1		62↓	59↓	85↓	83↓	90	79↓	0	8↑	35↑
18	Gary Medel		1		31↑		90	90	90	90	90	90
20	Joel Obi			0	18↑	0	24↑	30↑	90↓	0	0	0
44	René Krhin					5↑	0	90				
88	Hernanes		2	76↓	72↓	37↑	60↓		0	80↓	58↓	90
90	Yann M'Vila			90	90	53↓		90				
92	Enrico Baldini							1↑				
96	Andrea Palazzi					7↑	0					
Forwards												
7	Pablo Osvaldo	1	1	28↑	27↑	16↑	90	90				
8	Rodrigo Palacio	4	1	0	0	20↑	90	0	90	89↓	90	90
9	Mauro Icardi	1	1	90	90	90	0	55↓	75↓	90	90	90
28	George Pușcaș								0	1↑	0	0
91	Xherdan Shaqiri	1							90	90	82↓	0
97	Federico Bonazzoli				0	66↓	0	90				

Tommaso Berni, Giacomo Sciacca and Davide Costa were unused substitutes.
Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off;
Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-4-2, with 1-4-1-3-2 and 1-4-1-4-1 also used
- Compact defence; preference to sit deep away from home
- Good defensive organisation at set pieces
- Aerial strength a big factor in joint-best defensive record in group stage
- Experienced Medel the holding midfielder under Mancini
- Good passing game; assured combination play; rapid transitions
- Use of full-backs to push forward, mixed with attacks through middle
- Guarín a hard worker in midfield with powerful strike
- Skilful individuals in team; technical players comfortable in possession
- Forwards with quality in Icardi and Palacio

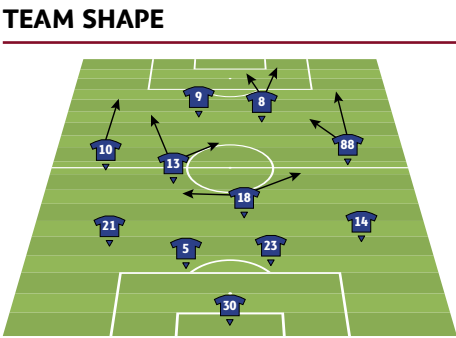
COACHES



Walter Mazzarri
Born: 01/10/1961, San Vincenzo (ITA)
Nationality: Italian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 26
Matches in European club competition:** 43
Head coach from: 24/05/2013 to 14/11/2014



Roberto Mancini
Born: 27/11/1964, Iesi (ITA)
Nationality: Italian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 14
Matches in European club competition:** 106
Head coach since: 14/11/2014



SSC Napoli

Italy



	G	A	SPP	SLO	YB	YB	SPP	SLO	TRA	TRA	DMO	DMO	WOL	WOL	DNI	DNI
			W 3-1	W 0-2	L 2-0	W 3-0	D 0-0	W 3-0	W 0-4	W 1-0	W 3-1	D 0-0	W 1-4	D 2-2	D 1-1	L 1-0
Goalkeepers																
1	Rafael Cabral		90	90	90	90	90	0	0	90	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	Mariano Andújar		0	0	0	0	0	90	90	0	90	90	90	90	90	90
Defenders																
4	Henrique	1	90	0	90	90	0	0	90	90	90	0	4↑	7↑	0	11↑
5	Miguel Britos		90	90	38↓	90	90	0	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
11	Christian Maggio		0	90	90	0	0	90	0			90	90		90	90
16	Giandomenico Mesto			11↑	0	90	90	16↑		90	0			90		
18	Juan Camilo Zúñiga		8↑							8↑	9↑					
26	Kalidou Koulibaly	1	90	90	0	90	90	90	90	0	8↓		0		0	0
31	Faouzi Ghoulam	3		90	90	52↑	13↑	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
33	Raúl Albiol	1	90		90	0	90		90		82↑	90	90	90	90	90
Midfielders																
6	Jonathan de Guzmán	4	1	63↓	84↓	90	0	27↑	70↓	69↓	70↓	27↑				
8	Jorginho			75↓	0	77↓	0		90	90	90	0	0	90	0	
14	Dries Mertens	4	1	90	90	90		63↓	90	90	63↓	60↓	83↓	8↑	29↑	
17	Marek Hamšík	4	2	82↓	79↓	28↑		90	90	0	13↑	20↑	19↑	75↓	60↓	90
19	David López	1		6↑	90	0		90	0	45↑	0	0	90	90	71↓	79↓
77	Walter Gargano			90	0		90	90	45↓	0			0	0	19↑	0
88	Gökhan Inler			90	90	90	0	90	90	90	90	0	90	90	0	90
Forwards																
7	José Callejón	1	2	84↓	27↑	15↑	17↑	90	74↓	20↑	77↓	82↓	90	90	90	77↑
9	Gonzalo Higuaín	7	3	70↓	17↑	6↑	11↑	69↓	12↑	80↓	63↓	90	81↓	86↓	68↓	90
21	Michu			20↑		62↓										
23	Manolo Gabbiadini	2	1						90	21↑		71↓	15↑	0	13↑	55↓
24	Lorenzo Insigne	2	0	0		73↓							30↑	30↓	82↓	61↓
91	Duván Zapata	2	1	0	73↓	90	79↓	21↑	78↓	10↑	27↑	0	0		22↑	

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off;
Matches: red = home; yellow = away

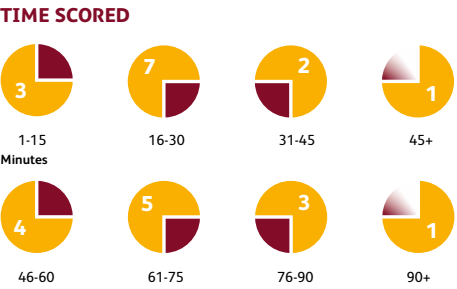
KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1, always with two screening midfielders ensuring balance
- High pressing game, closing down opposition to win ball back quickly
- Forward breaks from left-back Ghoulam; source of crosses into box
- Mertens threat cutting in from left with dribbling skills and shooting power
- Varied passing options in build up, including good diagonal passes
- Sound defensive organisation with solid centre-backs Britos and Albiol
- Swift three- or four-man counterattacks; rest of side stay back
- Hamšík vision and deep runs vital to quick transitions
- Higuaín key role as target man, with clever movement, hold-up play, finishing
- Various options for three attacking roles behind Higuaín, including hard-working Gabbiadini

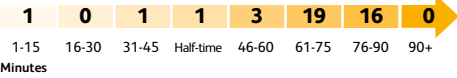
STATISTICS



GOAL ATTEMPTS 230 (101 on target) = 16.4 (7.2) per match



SUBSTITUTIONS 41/42



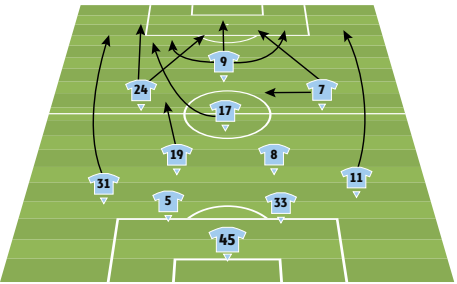
AVERAGES

POSSESSION 53%
Max: 63% v Dnipro (h) | Min: 38% v Wolfsburg (h)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 474
Max: 634 v Dnipro (h) | Min: 284 v Wolfsburg (h)

PASSING ACCURACY 87%
Max: 93% v Sparta Praha (h) | Min: 72% v Dinamo Moskva (a)

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Rafael Benítez

Born: 16/04/1960, Madrid (ESP)
Nationality: Spanish
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 58
Matches in European club competition:** 165
Head coach since: 28/05/2013

Team profiles (last 16)

AS Roma Italy



	G	A	CSKA	MC	BAY	BAY	CSKA	MC	FEY	FEY	FIO	FIO
	UCL/UEL	UCL/UEL	W 5-1	D 1-1	L 1-7	L 2-0	D 1-1	L 0-2	D 1-1	W 1-2	D 1-1	L 0-3
Goalkeepers												
12	Gianluca Curci			0				0				
26	Morgan De Sanctis		90		90	0	90	90	0	0	0	0
28	Łukasz Skorupski		0	90	0	90	0		90	90	90	90
Defenders												
2	Mapou Yanga-Mbiwa		14↑	90	90	90		90	90	90	90	58↓
3	Ashley Cole		0	90	45↓	45↑	0			0	0	0
13	Maicon	1/0	90	89↑				78↓				
23	Davide Astori		90		0		90	0	0	0	64↑	32↑
25	José Holebas			7↑	45↑	45↓	90	90	90	90	90	90
35	Vasilis Torosidis	0/4	90	1↑	90	90		90	90	90	90	27↓
44	Kostas Manolas		76↓	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	26↓	90
50	Michele Somma					0	0					
Midfielders												
4	Radja Nainggolan	2/0	90	90	90	90	83↓	90	90	16↑	90	5
6	Kevin Strootman						7↑	0				
7	Juan Manuel Iturbe	1/0	2/0	26↓	18↑	90	74↓	13↑	23↑		16↑	90
15	Miralem Pjanić			90	90	79↓	32↑	3↑	90	90	74↓	68↑
16	Daniele De Rossi					90	90	90	0	65↓	90	22↓
20	Seydou Keita	0/1		90	90		90	90	90	25↑	90	44↓
24	Alessandro Florenzi		0/1	64↑	83↓	45↑	58↓	90	12↑	15↑		90
32	Leandro Paredes			0	0	0			0	10↑		0
Forwards												
8	Adem Ljajić	0/1		19↑	0	11↑	0	87↓	67↓	0	74↓	75↓
10	Francesco Totti	2/0		90	72↓	45↓	0	90	70↓	65↓	80↓	0
22	Mattia Destro			0	0	0	90	0	20↑			
27	Gervinho	3/2	1/0	71↓	90	90	16↑	77↓	90	90	90	15↑
53	Daniele Verde									75↓	0	0
88	Seydou Doumbia									25↑		0

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away; yellow background indicates games played in the UEFA Champions League group stage

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-3-3, with variations including 1-4-4-2 with midfield diamond and 1-4-2-3-1
 - Influential experienced players in centre of pitch: De Rossi, Keita
 - Nainggolan the fulcrum in midfield with ball-winning ability
 - Defend with deep defensive block away from home; good organisation
- Centre-backs provide strength in air for attacking set pieces
 - Effective use of full-backs with Holebas providing attacking thrust down left
 - Florenzi a key player on right, at full-back or higher upfield
 - Ability to play through middle; good passing variety (Pjanić)
- Effective changes of tempo with quick defence-to-attack transitions
 - Speed of Gervinho in attack; threat in 1v1 situations



STATISTICS

Including UEFA Champions League group stage games

PLAYERS USED

23

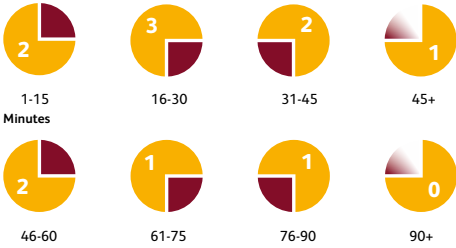
GOALS SCORED

12

(one own goal)

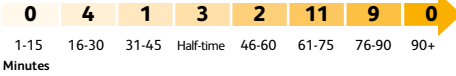
GOAL ATTEMPTS
104 (45 on target) = 10.4 (4.5) per game

TIME SCORED



SUBSTITUTIONS 30/30

(three double substitutions)



AVERAGES

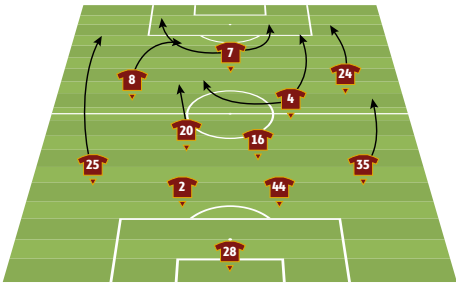
UEFA Europa League games only

POSSESSION 53%
Max: 57% v Feyenoord (a) | Min: 47% v Feyenoord (h)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 421
Max: 477 v Fiorentina (h) | Min: 364 v Fiorentina (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 87%
Max: 89% v Feyenoord (h) | Min: 83% v Fiorentina (a)

TEAM SHAPE



COACH

Rudi Garcia
Born: 20/02/1964, Nemours (FRA)
Nationality: French
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 22
Matches in European club competition:** 47
Head coach since: 12/06/2013

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Sevilla FC Spain



	G	A	FEY	RJK	STA	STA	FEY	RJK	MGB	MGB	VIL	VIL	ZEN	ZEN	FIO	FIO	DNI
	W 2-0	D 2-2	D 0-0	W 3-1	L 2-0	W 1-0	W 1-0	W 2-3	W 1-3	W 2-1	W 2-1	D 2-2	W 3-0	W 0-2	W 2-3		

Goalkeepers																	
1	Mariano Barbosa								0	0	0	0			0		
13	Beto			90	90	45↓	0	90						90		0	0
29	Sergio Rico		90	0	0	45↑	90	0	90	90	90	90	90	90	0	90	90
32	Juan Soriano		0														
33	David Soria												0				

Defenders																	
2	Benoît Trémoulinas	3	0	33↑		90		0	82↓	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
3	Fernando Navarro		90	90	90	0		90	90	8↑	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Diogo Figueiras	2	90	0	90	90	0	13↑	35↑	90	90	90	0	0	0	0	0
6	Daniel Carriço	1	1	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90
15	Timotheé Kolodziejczak		90	52↓so	S		90		0	90		90	90		90	90	90
21	Nicolas Pareja		0			90	0	90	90			90	90	90	21↓		
23	Coke	1		90	0	0	90	77↓		0	0	0	45↓	90	32↑	90	32↑
24	Alejandro Arribas					90		30↑									

Midfielders																	
4	Grzegorz Krychowiak	2		60↓	90	90	90	90		90	90	90		90	90	90	90
10	José Antonio Reyes	1	2	90	57↑	64↓	57↑	80↓	90	55↓	0	12↑	15↑	90	0	58↑	58↑
12	Vicente Iborra	2	1	0	90	90				90	90	75↓	80↓	45↓	69↑	17↑	35↑
17	Denis Suárez	3		30↑	0	26↑	90	60↓	60↓	2↑	0		10↑	45↑	1↑	0	0
18	Gerard Deulofeu	2	90	0	12↑	71↑	30↑	0	1↑								
19	Éver Banega	1	90	57↓	90	0	0	90	88↓	65↓	15↑			90	90	90	55↓
20	Vitolo	3	3				33↑	10↑	90	90	90	78↓	90	0	90↓	90	74↓
22	Alex Vidal	2	3	0	90	78↓			0	90↓	90	90	75↓	90	90	90	90
25	Stéphane Mbia	3	2	90	33↑	0	90	90	90		25↑	90	90	45↑	90	73↓	90

Forwards																	
7	Kevin Gameiro	4	2			63↓	90	90	24↑		13↑	64↑	65↑	64↑	15↑	16↑	20↑
9	Carlos Bacca	7	3	60↓	18↑	27↑	19↑	30↑	66↓	90	77↓	26↑	25↑	26↑	75↓	74↓	70↓
14	Iago Aspas	1		30↑	72↑	0	0	60↓	0				0	0			
30	Juan Muñoz									0							

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1
 - Good defensive organisation; centre-backs tight on opposition striker
 - Two screening midfielders (Mbia, Krychowiak) supporting central defenders
 - Attacking impetus from full-backs pushing high up pitch (Vidal)
- Flexible offensive midfielders, switching positions to open up space
 - Experienced players with a winning mentality
 - Dangerous, well-rehearsed set pieces, with good variety
 - Effective use of substitutes – scoring options from bench (Gameiro)
- Varied attacking strategy; quick transitions; excellent counterattacks
 - Talented centre-forward in Bacca, with goals and movement

STATISTICS

PLAYERS USED

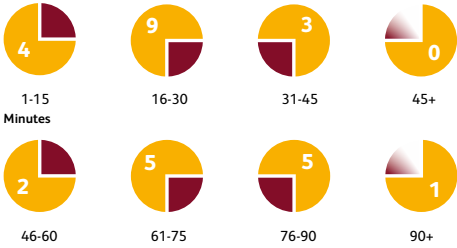
22

GOALS SCORED

29

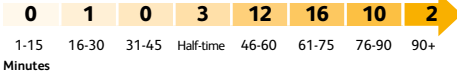
GOAL ATTEMPTS
170 (70 on target) = 11.3 (4.7) per match

TIME SCORED



SUBSTITUTIONS 44/45

(four double substitutions)



AVERAGES*

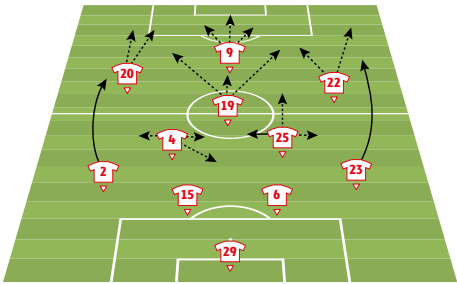
POSSESSION 48%
Max: 62% v Feyenoord (h), Rijeka (h) | Min: 30% v Mönchengladbach (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 357
Max: 566 v Rijeka (h) | Min: 200 v Mönchengladbach (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 83%
Max: 93% v Feyenoord (h) | Min: 70% v Fiorentina (a)

*Excluding matchday two v Rijeka (a) when playing 38 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH

Unai Emery
Born: 03/11/1971, Hondarribia (ESP)
Nationality: Spanish
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 56
Matches in European club competition:** 85
Head coach since: 14/01/2013

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Team profiles (last 16)

Torino FC Italy



	G	A	BRU D 0-0	KOB W 1-0	HJK W 2-0	HJK L 2-1	BRU D 0-0	KOB W 1-5	ATH D 2-2	ATH W 2-3	ZEN L 2-0	ZEN W 1-0
Goalkeepers												
1	Jean-François Gillet		90	90	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Luca Castellazzi											
30	Daniele Padelli		0	0	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Defenders												
3	Cristian Molinaro	1	1	90	90	19↑	90		90	90	90	82↓
5	Cesare Bovo		1	0	0	0	90	90	0	0	0	26↑
18	Pontus Jansson			90	0	90	90	30↑		0		0
19	Nikola Maksimović		1	90	90	90	0	60↓	90	90	90	90
21	Gastón Silva	1	1	90	0	90	90	90	0	0	0	0
24	Emiliano Moretti			0	90		90	90	90	90	90	90
25	Kamil Glik	1			90	0	90	0	90	90	90	90
32	Salvatore Masiello					71↓		0	0	0	0	0
36	Matteo Darmian	2	3	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
92	Federico Caronte							0				
98	Alessandro Dalmasso					0						
Midfielders												
7	Omar El Kaddouri	3	25↑	21↑	90	26↑	90	66↓	76↓	83↓	90	76↓
8	Alexander Farnerud								14↑	7↑	39↑	64↓
14	Alessandro Gazzi		90	90		90	90	90	90	90	90	90
20	Giuseppe Vives	1		0	90		12↑		0	90	17↑↓	
23	Antonio Nocerino		6↑		19↑	0						
28	Juan Sánchez Miño		84↓	69↓	0	90	0					
91	Giovanni Graziano						24↑					
94	Marco Benassi		65↓	90	71↓	64↓	78↓		90		28↓so	5
Forwards												
9	Marcelo Larrondo		0	12↑		35↑	2↑					
10	Barreto				14↑							
11	Maxi López	3						72↓	73↓	16↑		90
17	Josef Martínez	2	20↑	72↓	76↓	55↓	88↓	58↓	17↑	34↓	14↑	
22	Amauri	2	90	78↑	67↓		90	90	18↑	0	0	8↑
27	Fabio Quagliarella	3	70↓	18↑	23↑	90	0	32↑	32↑	90	74↓	90
90	Simone Rosso							0				
97	Simone Edera					0						

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

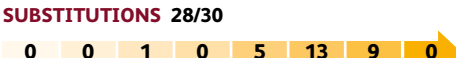
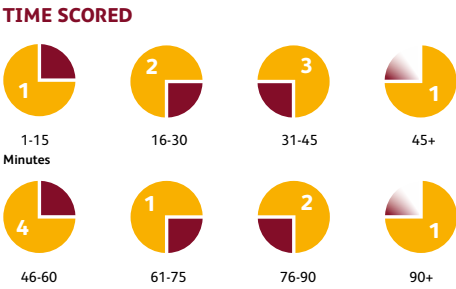
- 1-3-5-2, switched to 1-5-3-2 when defending
 - Deep, compact defensive block; good organisation and discipline
 - Glik outstanding leader, summing up defiance that brought many clean sheets
- Patient build-up from back through midfield; good off-the-ball movement
 - Gazzi the midfield pivot; other midfielders more forward-looking
 - Athletic players capable of swift transitions from defence to attack and vice versa
- Attacking wing-backs Darmian and Molinaro provide width
 - Dangerous in dead-ball situations
 - Maxi López an important physical focus for attack in knockout stage
 - Impressive attitude and desire on return to Europe



STATISTICS



GOAL ATTEMPTS
127 (46 on target) = 12.7 (4.6) per game



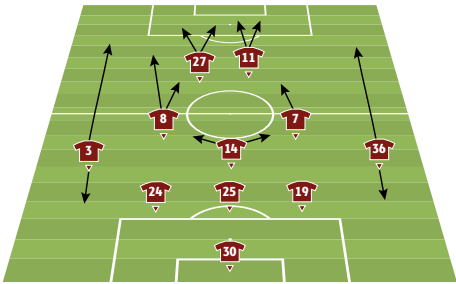
AVERAGES*

POSSESSION 50%
Max: 59% v HJK (h) | Min: 41% v Athletic (a)*

PASSES ATTEMPTED 401
Max. 552 v HJK (h) | Min: 300 v Athletic (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 88%
Max: 93% v København (a), København (h) | Min: 81% v Athletic (a)
*Excluding matchday nine v Zenit (a) when playing 62 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Giampiero Ventura

Born: 14/01/1948, Genoa (ITA)
Nationality: Italian
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 10
Matches in European club competition:** 14
Head coach since: 06/06/2011

Villarreal CF Spain



	G	A	MGB D 1-1	APL W 4-0	ZUR W 4-1	ZUR L 3-2	MGB D 2-2	APL W 0-2	SAL W 2-1	SAL W 1-3	SEV L 1-3	SEV L 2-1
Goalkeepers												
1	Sergio Asenjo		90	0	0	0	90	90	90	90	90	90
25	Juan Carlos		0	90	90	90	0		0	0	0	0
31	Aitor							0				
Defenders												
2	Mario Gaspar	1	90	75↑	90	0	90	45↓	90	90	90	90
3	Bojan Jokić										0	0
5	Mateo Musacchio	1	90						90	90	84↓	90
15	Victor Ruiz		90	90	90	90	90		90	90		
16	José Dorado			0	0	0	0	90	0		6↑	5↑
18	Jaume Costa	2			0	90	90	90	90	90	90	5
20	Gabriel		90	90	90	90	90	90				
22	Antonio Rukavina		0	15↓	90	0	90	0			0	90
28	Adrian Marín	1		90	90	90		0				
94	Eric Bailly								0	90	77↓so	
Midfielders												
4	Tomás Pina	1	60↓		21↑	65↓	19↑	90	90	86↓	5	90
6	Jonathan dos Santos	1	17↑	63↓	90	90	34↑	0	67↓	90	90	90
10	Cani	1	1	90	90	74↓	56↓					
14	Manu Trigueros	1	30↑	27↑	0	0	87↓	45↑	90	90	90	90
17	Denis Cheryshev	2	90	0	16↓	22↑	90	0	90	90	90	
19	Moi Gómez		90	0	59↓		90		9↑	45↓	0	
21	Bruno Soriano	1	90	90	69↓	25↑	90	45↓				
24	Javier Espinosa	2	2	0	90	90	68↓	3↑	45↑			
26	Sergio Marcos								0	0	0	0
Forwards												
7	Luciano Vietto	6	6	67↓	72↓	66↓	31↑	90	60↓	90	81↓	90
8	Ikechukwu Uche	2		6↑	0		71↓	30↑	70↓	68↓	68↓	45↓
9	Giovani dos Santos	3	2	18↑	24↑	90		20↑	22↑	20↑	22↑	45↑
23	Gerard Moreno	4	1	0	90	90	0	90	0	0	22↑	20↑
92	Joel Campbell								23↑	4↑	45↑	70↓

Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

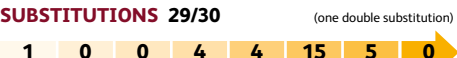
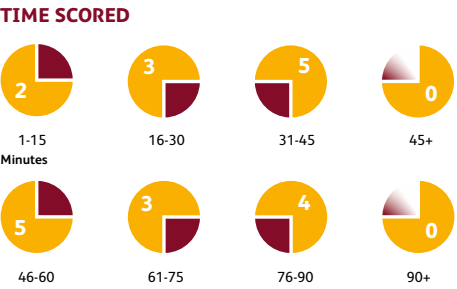
- Variations on 1-4-4-2
 - Compact defence led by Musacchio, keeping high line; goalkeeper covering behind
 - High pressing game; immediate pressure on opponent after losing ball
 - Pina the midfield linchpin; hard worker defensively and creative too
- Possession football with good end product: second-highest scorers in group stage
 - Constructive build-up play; good links between lines; excellent off-the-ball movement
 - Fast transitions, such as Dos Santos breakaway for second goal in Salzburg
- Attacking power in 1v1s; effective use of width; good crosses
 - Adventurous full-back in Mario Gaspar
 - Impressive forward pair in Vietto, Moreno



STATISTICS



GOAL ATTEMPTS
153 (71 on target) = 15.3 (7.1) per game



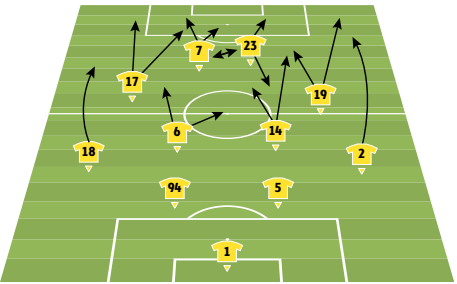
AVERAGES

POSSESSION 53%
Max: 63% v Sevilla (h) | Min: 38% v Mönchengladbach (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 449
Max. 560 v Sevilla (h) | Min: 258 v Salzburg (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 86%
Max: 93% v Apollon (a) | Min: 75% v Salzburg (h)

TEAM SHAPE



COACH



*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

Marcelino

Born: 14/08/1965, Villaviciosa (ESP)
Nationality: Spanish
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup:* 9
Matches in European club competition:** 13
Head coach since: 14/01/2013

Team profiles (last 16)

VfL Wolfsburg Germany



	G	A	EVE	LIL	KRA	KRA	EVE	LIL	SPO	SPO	INT	INT	NAP	NAP
	L 4-1	D 1-1	W 2-4	W 5-1	L 0-2	W 0-3	W 2-0	D 0-0	W 3-1	W 1-2	L 1-4	D 2-2		
Goalkeepers														
1	Diego Benaglio		90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
20	Max Grün		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Defenders														
2	Patrick Ochs													0
4	Marcel Schäfer				90	39↓	90	0	1↑	14↑	0	0	0	24↑
5	Timm Klose	1		0	0	51↑	0	0	0	0	0	90	0	90
8	Vieirinha	1	3		28↑	29↑	90	90	58↓	89↓	76↓	87↓	85↓	90
24	Sebastian Jung			90	62↓	90	0	90	90	0	0	0		15↑
25	Naldo	1	1	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
31	Robin Knoche			90	79↓	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	0
34	Ricardo Rodriguez	3		90	90		90	90	90	90	90	90	90	66↓
Midfielders														
7	Daniel Caligiuri	1		61↓	11↑	90	27↑	5↑	11↑	29↑	90	73↓	90	90
9	Ivan Perišić	1	2		90	61↓	45↓	90	90			3↑	17↑	26↑
10	Aaron Hunt	2		45↑	90	45↑	75↓		41↓					
14	Kevin De Bruyne	5	5	90	90	86↓	90	90	85↓	90	90↓	90	90	90
15	Christian Träsch		2			90	0	90	90	45↑	90	0		79↓
17	André Schürrle						79↓	61↓	45↓	0	64↓			
19	Junior Malanda			45↓		0	0	63↓	32↑					
22	Luiz Gustavo	1		77↓	90	90	90	90		90	90	90	90	90
23	Josuha Guilavogui	1	1	13↑	90	90	90	55↑so	S	90	90	90	70↓	75↓
28	Mateusz Klich			0		0								
30	Paul Seguin						0							0
Forwards														
3	Nicklas Bendtner	4		29↑	28↑		15↑	75↓		0	0	20↑	26↑	33↑
11	Ivica Olić			90	62↓	78↓	0	15↑	45↓					
12	Bas Dost	2			12↑	75↓		45↑	90	90	70↓	64↓	57↑	11↑
27	Maximilian Arnold	2		90	0	4↑	0	15↑	0	49↑	1↑		5↑	20↑

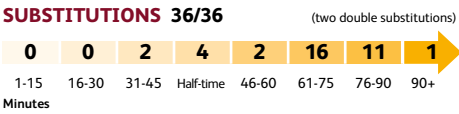
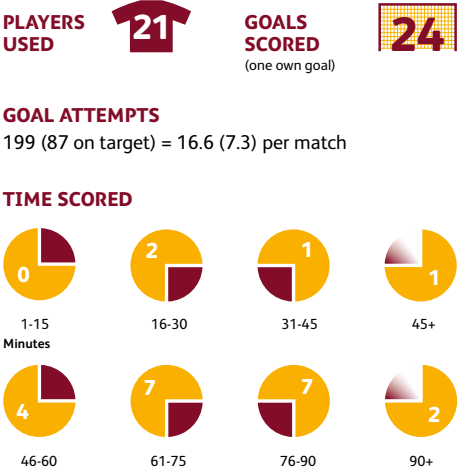
Numbers in the squad list refer to minutes played (0 = unused substitute); G = goals; A = assists; ↑ = brought on; ↓ = taken off; S = suspended; so = sent off; Matches: red = home; yellow = away

KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1
 - Impressively varied approach: passing through middle or breaking quickly with early crosses
 - De Bruyne pivotal with goals and assists, roaming wide and behind striker
 - Compact defence with high line; well-organised at set plays
- Aerial power in box (Naldo, Klose); dead-ball threat of De Bruyne, Rodriguez
 - Disciplined, hard-working midfielders, pressing opponents (Guilavogui)
 - Full-backs attack as midfielders step inside; Rodriguez particularly dangerous down left
- Lone striker Dost a good foil for De Bruyne
 - Perišić a threat with ability in 1v1s
 - Excellent team spirit and understanding; strong mentality when losing



STATISTICS



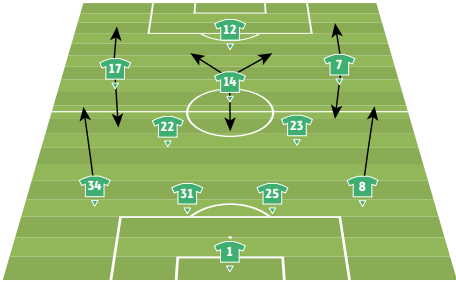
AVERAGES*

POSSESSION 53%
Max: 62% v Napoli (a) | Min: 43% v Internazionale (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 442
Max: 573 v Napoli (a) | Min: 339 v Everton (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 88%
Max: 93% v Everton (h) | Min: 77% v Krasnodar (h)
*Excluding matchday six v LOSC (a) when playing 35 minutes with ten men.

TEAM SHAPE



COACH

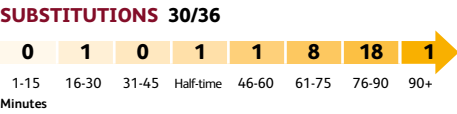
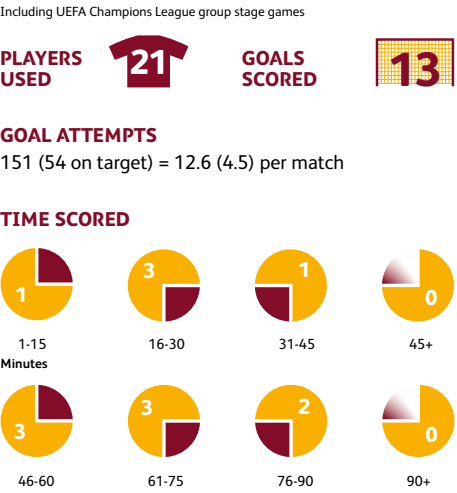
Dieter Hecking
Born: 12/09/1964, Castrop-Rauxel (GER)
Nationality: German
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup: 20
Matches in European club competition: 20
Head coach since: 22/12/2012

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

FC Zenit Russia



STATISTICS



AVERAGES

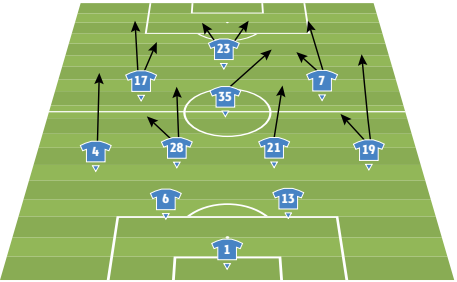
UEFA Europa League games only

POSSESSION 50%
Max: 64% v Sevilla (h) | Min: 39% v Sevilla (a)

PASSES ATTEMPTED 394
Max: 680 v Torino (h) | Min: 243 v Sevilla (a)

PASSING ACCURACY 86%
Max: 91% v Sevilla (h) | Min: 75% v Sevilla (a)

TEAM SHAPE



COACH

André Villas-Boas
Born: 17/10/1977, Porto (POR)
Nationality: Portuguese
Matches in UEFA Europa League/UEFA Cup: 38
Matches in European club competition: 59
Head coach since: 18/03/2014

*Group stage to final
**Including qualifying

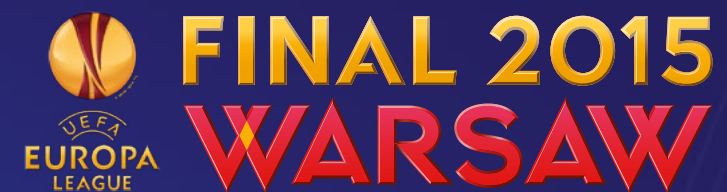
KEY FEATURES

- 1-4-2-3-1; 1-4-1-4-1
 - Compact defence playing high line; good defensive organisation
 - Impressive attacking work by overlapping right-back Smolnikov
 - Talented individuals with European knowhow
 - Experienced midfield screen (Witsel, Javi García, Tymoshchuk)
- Danny the creative force, source of defence-splitting passes
 - Hulk, left-footer on right; danger with long-range shooting, 1v1s
 - Set-piece threat from Hulk and Danny
- Clever passing; assured combination play; good links between lines
 - Mix of careful build-up play with quick transitions using speed and width



Event report

Journeys to European success



Known to fans across the world, the trophy highlights the brand values of excellence and prestige

UEFA Europa League branding enhanced the sense of occasion at the final



The UEFA Europa League brand embodies the spirit of a competition that thrives on diversity

In just six seasons, clubs from 36 member associations have participated in the UEFA Europa League group stage. In 2014/15, HJK Helsinki ensured the Finnish flag was flown for the first time as the competition's horizons continued to expand. The essence of the UEFA Europa League is to give as many clubs, players and fans from as many countries as possible the chance to experience European competition, with top European teams and unheralded hopefuls competing on a par.

The size and scale of the UEFA Europa League is unique. Forty-eight sides from across the continent feature in the group stage alone, and it takes 205 fixtures from matchday one to the final to find a winner. With only one team able to lift the trophy, for most it is the journey – the European adventure – that is most memorable. From FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk's unexpected run to the final to French minnows EA Guingamp capturing the hearts of a nation en route to the knockout stage, via Harry Kane's

sudden rise to stardom with Tottenham Hotspur FC, the UEFA Europa League has rich stories to tell far beyond the outcome of the final.

For sheer numbers, VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach perhaps set the bar when 10,000 of their fans flocked to their group stage game at FC Zürich. Tickets sold out in minutes, and the club chartered two trains for the trip to Switzerland. About 1,500 supporters travelled with the team, giving fresh meaning to the UEFA Europa League slogan 'Together as one' with club, fans and players united for a memorable away day.

That is the essence of the UEFA Europa League brand, which lauds the accessibility and diversity of the competition combined with the high quality of football on display. The brand draws on the history and heritage of a competition that first kicked off as the UEFA Cup in 1971, and that some of the game's greatest players have won.

The format may have changed over time, but the trophy remains the same. Known to fans

throughout the world, it embodies the brand values of excellence and prestige, and was also the main image of the 2012–15 identity cycle. For Warsaw 2015, the run-of-season brand was successfully incorporated into the Polish capital's cityscape, and the final identity focused on the trophy with the National Stadium Warsaw at its heart. This built on the previous two seasons, in which the final destinations of Amsterdam (2013) and Turin (2014) were key brand elements.

The visual concept for the final was designed to celebrate the occasion as well as the hosts. Warsaw was depicted as a city of contrasts, with bold modern architecture complementing the more intimate atmosphere of the old town. Holy Cross (Świętokrzyski) Bridge – used by supporters to cross the river Vistula to get to the stadium from the old town – was an important symbol. Besides portraying a notable local landmark, it represented the key concept of 'Journeys to European success', as finalists Dnipro and Sevilla FC neared their goal.

Centralised marketing

Together as one

A unified approach by the UEFA Europa League's key stakeholders further strengthened the competition

Since the UEFA Europa League kicked off in 2009, a centralised marketing strategy has been influential in successfully promoting the competition. Working closely with UEFA, the clubs, media, broadcasters, sponsors and licensing partners have benefited from a unified message and identity built around the strength of the UEFA Europa League brand.

Stakeholders are provided with brand assets to help them drive the competition forward, while UEFA-led workshops and brand manuals explain best practice. UEFA's TV Production team set stringent guidelines for television programming and monitor the output, creating consistently high-quality coverage that gives sponsors and suppliers the perfect platform to showcase their products worldwide.

Western Union completed their third season as the UEFA Europa League's presenting sponsor, alongside official partners Hankook and HTC and the official supplier partner, adidas. Each partner extended their association with the competition by incorporating the brand into their UEFA Europa League activations, competitions and promotions.

During the 2014/15 season, UEFA's promotional activity was focused around the 'Together as one' campaign, which highlighted how clubs, their supporters and local communities unite to share and celebrate their UEFA Europa League experience. Finalists FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk embodied this ethos, their players donating money to help their fans attend the final in Warsaw. One of the chief brand assets is the UEFA Europa League trophy

itself, and its visibility was greatly enhanced by visits to clubs and through its use by broadcasters to augment their matchnight coverage. Print and digital partnerships in key European markets also increased UEFA Europa League awareness – 80 UEFA Europa League branded pages were produced through partnerships with English newspapers, reaching a circulation of 38.2 million.

A partnership with GOAL.com ensured match highlights, additional editorial content and competitions reached fans across Europe. Clubs were also helped to promote ticket sales directly by promotional videos and marketing support newsletters.

The passion and drama of the competition was further projected by a UEFA-produced video featuring action from the semi-finals – including unique behind-the-scenes footage – documenting the fans' experience and emphasising the spirit of the UEFA Europa League. The video was published on the UEFA Europa League Facebook and Twitter pages, generating over 120,000 views and a reach of 1 million.

Meanwhile, sponsors and Polish broadcasters worked together to advertise a fan competition, the 41 lucky winners of which attended the final, with 30 of them taking part in a match on the pitch at the National Stadium Warsaw. The prize also included hotel accommodation, travel and personalised adidas kit, and was important in expanding both supporter engagement and the UEFA Europa League's reach.

Finalists Dnipro embodied the 'Together as one' ethos, their players donating money to help their fans attend the final in Warsaw



Collectors' edition

Social media is an essential tool in engaging fans, and the popularity of the UEFA Europa League was evident as the @EuropaLeague Twitter account more than doubled its followers in 2014/15 to 2.3 million, while Facebook fans passed the 10 million barrier. In addition, #UELSticker proved popular in directing fans to the selfie football sticker application, which enabled supporters to make their own UEFA Europa League branded sticker. Launched to coincide with the round of 32, over 70,000 stickers were created, with www.uelselfiefootballsticker.com drawing 160,000 unique visits.



Clockwise from top: Carlos Bacca celebrates Sevilla's victory; a Celtic fan takes part in the sticker campaign; the 'Together as one' video united supporters; Sevilla fans put on a show; Dnipro supporters enjoy the build-up in Warsaw

Presenting sponsor

Western Union

In its final season as UEFA Europa League presenting sponsor, the global payment services provider Western Union rounded off a successful three-year association with the competition by amplifying many of its off and on-pitch activations from previous seasons.

Online, Western Union brought the official UEFA Europa League Fantasy Football game to people worldwide via UEFA.com, providing prizes and experiences to winners along the way.

For the knockout stage, Western Union also gave youngsters the opportunity to become player escorts and walk out onto the pitch with their idols. This culminated with 22 boys and girls striding out for the Warsaw final in front of a television audience of millions.

From the start of 2015, Western Union gave away all-expenses-paid trips including tickets to the final in markets across the world. Simply using Western Union services to transfer money entered thousands of customers into a prize draw to play in the Fans' Final on the pitch in Warsaw, the day after the decider.

At the final itself, a dedicated hospitality programme for over 300 guests and fan zone activations allowed Western Union to bring its sponsorship to life one last time. This culminated with CEO Hikmet Ersek presenting the man of the match trophy after the game.

The Western Union PASS campaign, meanwhile, ensured the company left behind a formidable legacy from its time as UEFA Europa League presenting sponsor.

During the 2012–15 cycle, the Western Union Foundation supported education programmes in ten countries through its PASS campaign



Western Union player escorts line up with the teams prior to kick-off in Warsaw



Éver Banega receives his man of the match award from Western Union CEO Hikmet Ersek



Western Union's hospitality lounge



Western Union PASS ambassador Patrick Vieira

PASS masters

Money on a mission – Western Union's PASS campaign has turned players' passes and football fans' enthusiasm for the game into education. When Western Union became a global partner of the UEFA Europa League 2012, it wanted to use its sponsorship to promote the company's commitment to improving access to education for young people. It set itself a challenging goal: to deliver 1m days of education over the three seasons of its sponsorship.

Through an initiative called PASS, Western Union has turned every successful pass made from the group stage onwards over the last three campaigns into funding to support secondary education for vulnerable young people around the world. Launched in September 2012, Western Union committed to a \$1.8m, three-year grant through the Western Union Foundation to support UNICEF education programmes in ten countries.

On the eve of the 2015 final in Warsaw, it announced that it had reached this milestone. The money raised has supported educational projects including teacher training, financial literacy, vocational and life-skills training, and school improvements. PASS funding has been delivered in Brazil, Jamaica, Senegal, Nigeria, China, Morocco and Turkey, with programmes in Colombia, Mexico and Romania starting in 2015.

In 2014/15, Western Union gave fans the opportunity to turn their passion into

life-changing education for young people. Entering the final year of its sponsorship, Western Union delivered a campaign to harness supporters' enthusiasm for their clubs and engage them in the broader ambitions of PASS.

Based on the insight that crowd passion helps to decide who progresses to the final, Western Union delivered #ShowYourPASSion. Launched to coincide with the knockout stage, Western Union converted each tweet or retweet of a fan hashtag into a contributing pass.

The #ShowYourPASSion campaign followed Western Union's successful social media campaign #PassForSchool in 2014/15, when fans were encouraged to take a trip down memory lane and share a childhood sporting photo of themselves.

Marc Audrit, head of brand at Western Union, said: "For us, the sponsorship of the UEFA Europa League has been about money on a mission, a mission that is at the heart of everything we stand for as a brand. While it has been the players' passes on the pitch that have helped Western Union's PASS initiative deliver better education, through our partnership with UNICEF, it was down to the fans to get us over the line – and they didn't disappoint."

Official partners

Hankook and HTC

Hankook

In its third season as a UEFA Europa League official partner, Hankook again looked to align its premium product offering with the competition. Building on the success of its activations in the previous two seasons, in 2014/15 Hankook offered fans, customers and employees unique, 'money can't buy' opportunities such as behind-the-scenes stadium tours at selected matches and ticket raffles for sold-out games.

Towards the culmination of the competition, Hankook asked fans to show their support for their team via Digital Fan Match, an online viral campaign that encouraged messages on social media, with the winning set of fans being unveiled on the giant screen at the final.

Hankook was also able to showcase its sponsorship at tradeshows and automotive exhibitions across Europe, adding an extra touch point for fans throughout the continent. This concluded with the Hankook Brand World truck taking up prime position at the UEFA Europa League final fan zone in Castle Square, Warsaw.



Alongside an all-inclusive hospitality programme at the final for Hankook-invited guests, stadium promotional activities included a giant tyre and the chance for fans to have their face painted and to receive one of the now famous Hankook supporter wigs (right). With the announcement that Hankook has renewed its sponsorship of the competition for a further three years, this successful partnership with one of the world's leading tyre manufacturers looks set to go from strength to strength.



HTC

HTC's final season as a partner of the UEFA Europa League was marked by the company building on its momentum from the previous two campaigns. Photography remained a key focus, with many fans getting up close to the match action through the HTC Fan Photographer experience. Throughout the season, HTC gave fans the chance to become an 'official photographer' at the side of the pitch during player warm-ups and team lineups for UEFA Europa League matches. This was extended at the final to enable the Fan Photographer to be on the pitch to take photos of Sevilla FC lifting the trophy. In March 2015, HTC launched its new smartphone, the HTC One M9. This is the third flagship device from the One series and was an integral part of HTC's campaign leading up to the final.

In Warsaw, the HTC Mobile Studio was present at the two-day neutral fan zone in Castle Square. HTC's stand, which included phone displays, a chill-out area, entertainment from football freestylers and a live DJ, was a great success and attracted a large number of fans. In addition, the official UEFA Europa League ambassador, Jerzy Dudek, was a special surprise guest and was interviewed by young student journalists before meeting supporters.



HTC competition winners pitchside at the final



Final ambassador Jerzy Dudek visits the HTC stand at the fan zone in Warsaw



Official supplier partner

adidas

Fan involvement was central to adidas campaigns during the 2014/15 season, with UEFA Europa League supporters very much at the forefront of their activities. At the final in Warsaw, adidas staged the hugely popular UEFA Europa League street football tournament. Over 200 teams of six registered to take part, with 80 ultimately involved in the competition, which was used to promote the launch of adidas' #bethedifference campaign centred around their new X and Ace boots.

Throughout the season adidas ran a Europe-wide advocacy project, with UEFA Europa League tickets up for grabs for the biggest fans of particular clubs or players. Supporters could upload pictures of themselves for a chance to win, while others were selected by adidas itself based on their online discussions around key players. Each time, the winners were given two tickets to the home match of that club or player.

adidas is central to the success of the UEFA Europa League and its iconic ball a symbol of the competition. An impressive 6,500 official match balls were delivered to the 48 participating teams at the start of the group stage, the design reflecting the UEFA Europa League's official brand colours. In its role as official supplier to the competition, adidas provided apparel for all match officials, venue staff and the official ballboys/girls throughout the season as well as apparel, caps and bags for over 500 volunteers at the final.



The adidas-run UEFA Europa League street football tournament in Warsaw was hugely popular



Welcome to Warsaw

Memories of UEFA EURO 2012 flooded back as Europe's footballing spotlight turned on the Polish capital once again

"You can feel something great is around the corner." This is how Jerzy Dudek, the former Poland, Feyenoord and Liverpool FC goalkeeper, described the mounting sense of anticipation in Warsaw ahead of the UEFA Europa League final.

The showpiece on 27 May 2015 was a memorable first for Polish football – the first time the country had hosted a major European final – and Dudek, as ambassador for the event, was reflecting the pride and excitement felt.

Only football lovers of a certain vintage will remember the solitary occasion that a Polish team graced a European final – when Górnik Zabrze finished runners-up in the 1969/70 European Cup Winners' Cup – yet fans of all ages in Poland have now seen the international spotlight shine on Warsaw's National Stadium.

The stadium on the eastern side of the river Vistula was built for UEFA EURO 2012, when it staged five matches including a quarter-final and a semi-final. Its red-and-white façade was designed to evoke a waving Polish flag, but it will have been a welcome sight for the fans of Sevilla FC, who supplied vivid splashes of these same colours as they congregated in the old town on the day of the final.

There was plenty of blue and yellow on view too. Warsaw is only 450km from Dnipropetrovsk and a good number of the estimated 10,000 FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk supporters – many of whom had journeyed by road – strolled the streets wrapped in Ukrainian flags. It made for a bright spectacle as fans gathered in the bars and cafés of Nowy Świat, the street linking the old town with the approach to the ground, where elegant lamp posts bore the livery of the UEFA Europa League.

Castle Square in the heart of the old town offered a notably handsome backdrop to the neutral fan zone, which was the main hub of activities in the 24 hours leading up to the game. There was a mini-pitch on which children competed in five-a-side matches, while visitors waited in line to be photographed alongside the UEFA Europa League trophy.

Dudek himself put in an appearance on the afternoon of the final, signing autographs and trying his luck at the Western Union passing challenge, one of several sources of action together with the penalty shoot-out game presented by sponsor Hankook and the mobile studio provided by HTC where visitors could have their mobile phones engraved.

Also in attendance were 200 young beneficiaries of a UEFA Foundation for Children initiative – namely, a group comprising vulnerable children living in Poland, selected under the supervision of the Polish Football Federation (PZPN) and the Municipality of the Capital of Warsaw. In total, 14 associations with a recognised role in assisting vulnerable children were chosen to be represented by the youngsters at the final.

Warsaw had welcomed the UEFA Europa League trophy a month before, when PZPN president Zbigniew Boniek joined the city's mayor Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz to collect the silverware from Sevilla president José Castro Carmona and sporting director Monchi at a ceremony in the Primate's Palace (Pałac Prymasowski).

Carmona joked then that the trophy was only on loan – "I hope we can take it back to Seville on 27 May," he said – and this was not the only wish that came true. From Boniek, one of the greats of Polish football, there came the following promise, which was certainly fulfilled on a memorable day not just for Sevilla and Dnipro supporters but for Warsaw as well. "Whoever comes to Warsaw will have a great time, see a beautiful city and stadium, and – fingers crossed – it will be a wonderful match too."

Clockwise from top: the view of the National Stadium Warsaw from the old town; children enjoy the fan zone mini-pitch; the lineup for the Fans' Final; UEFA ambassador Jerzy Dudek; fans congregate in Castle Square



The showpiece was a memorable first for Polish football – the first time the country had hosted a major European final



Fans' Final

UEFA and the UEFA Europa League's sponsor partners also reached out to the footballing public by selecting 30 of 41 competition winners to play on the National Stadium pitch the day after the match. Participants in the 2015 UEFA Europa League Fans' Final used the same dressing rooms and played on the same pitch as the two finalist clubs had done – and also got to play in the company of UEFA Champions League winner Christian Karembu.

Broadcast network

Global view

Strong partnerships with broadcasters across the world have been pivotal to the growth of the UEFA Europa League

From Albania to Vietnam, the UEFA Europa League is watched around the globe, with UEFA's broadcast network providing the highest-quality coverage in every continent.

Working in close partnership with UEFA, broadcasters are furnished with broadcast manuals and toolkits to ensure best practice and consistency of coverage, while on-screen graphics, break bumpers and stings as well as studio backdrops promote an unmistakable UEFA Europa League look and feel. There were 516 TV rights-holding broadcaster personnel representing 36 organisations on site at the final, 12 of which had unilateral on-site productions. Fifty TV and radio commentary positions were also catered for. Players from 80 countries took

part in the 2014/15 UEFA Europa League – and with 107 broadcasters in more than 192 territories screening their exploits, the result is a truly global perspective on a uniquely European competition.

Outside Europe	
Australia	SBS Setanta Sport Australia
Bolivia	Unitel Bolivia
Brazil	Esporte Interativo Terra
Canada	Sportsnet QQ
China	Sina SMG
Costa Rica	Repretel
Ecuador	Canal UNO TV
El Salvador	Canal 4
Guatemala	Radio Television Guatemala
Honduras	Televiscentro
Hong Kong	i-Cable
India	Ten Sports
Indonesia	SCTV
Japan	Sky Perfect TV
Latin America	ESPN Fox Sports
Macau	TDM
Malaysia/Brunei	Astro
Mexico	Televisa TV Azteca
Middle East	Al Jazeera
Mongolia	Channel 1
Myanmar	S Media
Nicaragua	Ratensa
Panama	TVN Panama
Paraguay	Paravision
Peru	ATV Peru
Philippines	Balls
Singapore	SingTel
South Korea	SPO TV
Sub-Saharan Africa	Canal+ Afrique Star Times SuperSport
Suriname	STVS
Taiwan	ELTA TV
Thailand/Laos/ Cambodia	True Visions
USA	Fox Sports
Venezuela	Meridiano TV
Vietnam	VSTV VTV

Europe			
Albania	Tring	Kazakhstan	KTK
Austria	ORF Sky Austria	Latvia	Viasat
Azerbaijan	AZTV	Lithuania	Viasat
Belarus	Belarus TV	Malta	Melita PBS
Belgium	RTL Telenet VRT	Moldova	Realitatea TV
Bosnia & Herzegovina	BHRT Telekom Serbia	Montenegro	RTCG Telekom Serbia
Bulgaria	BNT bTV Media Group	Netherlands	Fox Sports NL RTL
Croatia	HRT Telekom Croatia	Norway	CMore Norway
Cyprus	CyBC CYTA	Poland	ITI
Czech Republic	Czech TV Nova Sport	Portugal	SIC Sport TV
Denmark	CMore Denmark	Romania	DIGI Sport Dolce Sport Pro TV
Estonia	Viasat	Russia	NTV NTV Plus
Finland	Nelonen	Serbia	RTS Telekom Serbia
France	beIN Sports M6/W9	Slovakia	Nova Sport RTV Slovakia
FYR Macedonia	MKRTV Telekom Macedonia	Slovenia	RTV SportKlub
Georgia	Global Media Group (GMG)	Spain	Mediapro Mediaset España
Germany	Sat.1 / Kabel 1 Sky Deutschland	Sweden	TV4 Sport
Greece	Antenna TV NovaSports	Switzerland	SRG Teleclub
Hungary	DIGI Sport Story TV	Turkey	Dogan Group
Iceland	365 Media	Ukraine	1+1 Ukraine Media Group Ukraine (MGU)
Ireland	Setanta Sports TV3	United Kingdom	BT Sport ITV
Israel	Charlton	Pan-European	Eurosport
Italy	Mediaset		



From pitch presentation positions to innovative filming, broadcasters took fans to the heart of the action



With 107 broadcasters screening matches, the result is a truly global perspective on a uniquely European competition

Media rights

Sharp focus

Impressive viewing figures across Europe and further afield in 2014/15 highlighted the UEFA Europa League's broad appeal



Spanish and Ukrainian television audiences understandably peaked for the final, but the drama was enjoyed in far more than those two nations. The match was aired in more than 100 countries to an estimated global average audience in the region of 60 million viewers. The final's global unique reach, meanwhile, was estimated at 190 million viewers.



Germany

↑37%

At 2.1 million viewers, this season's average matchday audience on Kabel Eins was 37% higher than in 2013/14. The round of 16 second-leg tie between FC Internazionale Milano and VfL Wolfsburg attracted 3.5 million viewers (a 13.3% share), the highest TV audience achieved on Kabel Eins during the 2012–15 cycle.

Italy

5.9m



At 3.4 million viewers, free-to-air coverage on Mediaset of the 2014/15 season produced the highest average matchday audience in Italy since the competition started. The second leg between FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk and SSC Napoli produced the season's best viewing figures – 5.9 million (a 22.5% share) on Canale 5. The 2014/15 campaign was also a record breaker for Mediaset's pay TV coverage, which averaged 1.2 million viewers per matchday.

United Kingdom

3.6m

ITV recorded its highest UEFA Europa League audience since Chelsea FC won the competition in 2012/13, Liverpool FC's round of 32 first-leg tie with Beşiktaş JK attracting 3.6 million viewers, a 14.7% share. Meanwhile, BT Sport's average matchday audience increased by 222% compared with 2013/14.

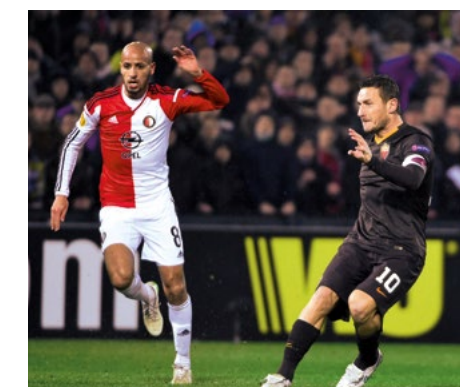
Spain

4.9m

The final was shown live on Cuatro and was the most watched transmission of 2015 up to that point, attracting 4.9 million viewers at an audience share of 29.7%.

Netherlands

2.3m



Feyenoord's round of 32 second-leg tie against AS Roma was the most watched match in Dutch UEFA Europa League history, with 2.3 million tuning in to RTL7. With a 35.8% share, the match attracted seven times more viewers than typically watch RTL7 during prime time.

Ukraine

2.8m



In Ukraine, the final was the most watched football broadcast of the year up to that point, with 2.8 million fans watching the match on the 2+2 channel, representing a 23.5% audience share. The previous high of 2.5 million had watched FC Dynamo Kyiv defeat Everton FC 5-2 on the Ukraine TV and Football TV channels in the second leg of their round of 16 tie.

Audience growth

In Europe's top six markets – France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom – an average of 13.4 million viewers watched the final. The UEFA Europa League's appeal crossed continents, with impressive figures from Central America to southern Africa and the Far East highlighting the competition's expanding popularity. TV Azteca Mexico averaged over a million viewers per match, a rise of 50% on 2013/14, and attracted 1.5 million viewers for the semi-final second leg between ACF Fiorentina and Sevilla FC. For the opening rounds of the knockout stage, audiences in South Africa were up 24% on 2013/14, while in Indonesia matchdays averaged 1.5 million viewers on SCTV and peaked at 2.8 million on matchday eight.

Lights, camera, action

High-quality, innovative coverage was a hallmark of the 2012-15 broadcast cycle

UEFA TV Production ensures the highest standards are maintained to provide fans around the world with the best possible viewing experience

As Sevilla FC's club captain, Fernando Navarro, held the UEFA Europa League trophy aloft, it was not only fans of the Andalusian side that had reason to celebrate. For UEFA's TV Production team the moment also represented the culmination of another successful three-year cycle, working in collaboration with the competition's host broadcasters to beam images into homes around the world.

For host broadcaster TVP, the Warsaw final represented their first and only UEFA Europa League match of the season. After months of planning and cross-UEFA consultations, TV Production appointed its own production team, working in full partnership with TVP's technical

team. Knut Fleischmann was selected from over 140 directors across Europe to direct the match, and he and TVP implemented a 35-camera production – including a helicopter-mounted camera, an aerial camera system suspended high above the pitch, in-goal mini-cameras and two goal-line cameras mounted on the stadium catwalks above each goal.

In total, 549 visiting broadcast staff were on site for the final, and UEFA TV Production ensured that all their varied requirements were met. Nine flash positions, one indoor studio, four pitch-view studios, two in-stand presentation positions and nearly 6,000m² of TV compound space were made available to broadcasters to customise each of their productions. Working with local suppliers, a complete telecom infrastructure was also installed, as well as over 60 dedicated TV commentary positions. UEFA TV Production also managed the stadium TV feed, which kept fans at the National Stadium Warsaw entertained and informed on big screens throughout the event.

During the season, UEFA Europa League host broadcasters were provided with additional programming material to supplement their match coverage. This included promotional trailers, club and city profiles, matchday highlights and group and season reviews, as well as coverage of the UEFA Europa League draws from Nyon. In 2015/16, UEFA Europa League broadcasters will also be provided with a new magazine show programme, bringing fresh insight behind the scenes and highlighting the unique nature of the clubs and stories in the competition.

Maintaining consistent, high-quality programming to UEFA's exacting standards is the role of the UEFA quality control team, who monitored coverage of each match throughout the season from the match command centre in Nyon. As the new cycle commences, UEFA TV Production will continue to provide assistance and support to UEFA Europa League broadcasters to ensure the highest standards are maintained, giving fans around the world the best possible coverage.

Story so far

In the UEFA Europa League's six seasons, 164 clubs from 36 of UEFA's 54 member associations have participated in the group stage – proof indeed of the scale, scope and variety of European club football's most diverse competition

Austria

21

Salzburg hold the record for most goals scored in a group stage (21 in 2014/15) and have scored the most group stage goals overall (57), with Alan (12) Jonathan Soriano (9) accounting for over a third of them. Salzburg have also won more group stage games than any side – with 20.



Czech Republic



Cyprus



Denmark



Finland



36

Finland became the 36th nation represented in the group stage when HJK qualified this season. Two-thirds of UEFA's 54 member associations have now supplied at least one team to the competition during its six years.

Azerbaijan



Belarus



Bulgaria



Croatia



Greece



France



Hungary



Latvia



Belgium



5

Anderlecht are one of five sides to advance from the group stage with a perfect six wins from six games – Tottenham, Zenit, Salzburg and Dinamo Moskva are the others.

England



Italy



19

Italian clubs have played the most group stage campaigns. Spain are hot on their heels with 17, with Belgium, England and the Netherlands on 16.

Germany

12

More German clubs have taken part in the group stage than teams from any other country. Portugal and Italy are second with 11.



Israel



Moldova



Kazakhstan



4,600km

The longest journey for a group stage match – Shakhter Karagandy to AZ Alkmaar.



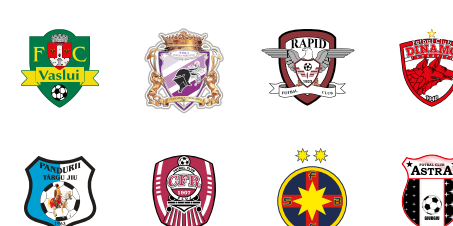
Slovenia



Slovakia



Romania



14

Romania's Astra were one of 14 sides to make their group stage debuts in 2014/15, along with Dinamo Moskva, Krasnodar, Qarabağ, Asteras, Lokeren, Rio Ave, AaB, Guingamp, Dinamo Minsk, St-Étienne, Feyenoord, HJK and Torino.

Netherlands



6

PSV hold the record of most group stage appearances.

Norway



Tromsø are the northernmost team to have competed in the group stage, with Hapoel Tel-Aviv the southernmost, Shakhter Karagandy furthest east and Nacional the furthest west.

Serbia



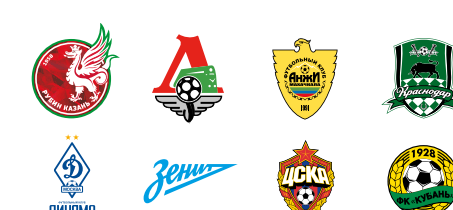
Scotland



Poland



Russia



Spain



Spanish teams have advanced from the group stage to win the UEFA Europa League three times – Atlético in 2010 and Sevilla in 2014 and 2015.

Switzerland



Turkey



Ukraine



Republic of Ireland



Sweden



Portugal



3

Sporting are one of three sides to have won their group a competition-leading three times. Salzburg and PSV are the others.

Shared experience

Extensive coverage across UEFA's media channels helped bring fans together and take them to the heart of the action



Fan engagement



Facebook

10.7m total page likes – a **42%** increase on 2013/14
3.6m new page likes during the season
116,000 new page likes during final week
9.8 million people reached by final week content



Twitter

2.3 million followers – a **53%** increase on 2013/14
1.1 million new followers during the season
27.1m impressions in May 2015
813,000 new followers in the build-up to the final

The multi-layered coverage of the UEFA Europa League season on UEFA.com complemented the competition and highlighted its unique, widespread and ever-increasing appeal. With the list of clubs involved often changing considerably from year to year, the UEFA Europa League provides great stories, with audiences responding to the excitement and the novelty, consuming content on UEFA.com and sharing their thoughts on social media.

The popularity of the competition's social media accounts rose markedly, with 3.6m new Facebook page likes in the year following the 2014 final and 1.1 million new Twitter followers, huge increases of 42% and 53% respectively. This growth underlined the changing way many users engaged with UEFA.com: bespoke infographics attracted fans from different platforms to the website, and the site in turn created more social media-friendly content. Editorial and video features were created on UEFA.com after directly engaging with followers on particular topics.

Content was available in eight languages, and from the start of the 48-team group stage UEFA.com provided coverage of every game, with goal flashes on all digital outlets, reports on every match and highlights on UEFA.com for 12 hours from midnight every matchnight. Press kits written by UEFA.com's editorial staff gave the world's media background on the competing teams, players and competition history – providing detailed information on lesser-known clubs in particular.

UEFA.com's network of correspondents in all 54 member nations delivered a depth of coverage that no other footballing outlet could rival, and this was reflected in the numbers, with 24.7m visits to the UEFA Europa League website during the season, up 14% on 2013/14. There were 302,000 visitors on the day of the final itself, up 23% on the previous year. That holders Sevilla FC made it to Warsaw was perhaps no great surprise – but the success of their opponents, FC Dnipro Dnipropetrovsk, captured the world's imagination.

The final itself drew in plenty more neutrals. UEFA.com helped to produce the match programme, which was also downloadable for those wishing to share in the occasion from their laptops and other mobile devices. Exclusive interviews with Sevilla and Dnipro players were screened on UEFA.com and also used by the clubs and other media outlets. Videos aired during the week of the final on UEFA.com reached 697,000 people and the UEFA Europa League also proved a popular draw on UEFA.com's new YouTube channel, UEFA.tv, which was launched during the season. The video of the season's top ten UEFA Europa League goals was the competition's most popular, with nearly 44,000 views.

There were more than 65,000 mentions of the official UEFA hashtag #UELfinal on Twitter. More than a million people engaged with content on the UEFA Europa League Facebook page during the final week, meanwhile, with 329,000 fans following events on Instagram.

Next stop Basel

St. Jakob-Park will host the competition's 45th final

With Sevilla FC's triumph in Warsaw still fresh in the memory, the 2015/16 UEFA Europa League campaign kicked off with the first qualifying round on 2 July 2015. Basel's St. Jakob-Park hosts the final nearly 11 months later on 18 May 2016.

Switzerland's largest arena has been home to the big occasion since first opening its doors in March 2001. Accustomed to FC Basel 1893's success in the Swiss Super League, it also took centre stage during UEFA EURO 2008, and more recently during Basel's series of impressive European campaigns. The incredible atmosphere when Marcelo Díaz

struck the winning spot kick against Tottenham Hotspur FC in the 2012/13 UEFA Europa League quarter-finals gave a taste of things to come for the 2016 finalists.

The stadium's nickname Joggeli – 'little Jakob' in Basel's German dialect – reflects the affection locals have for their ground, and with good reason. It was designed by Basel firm Herzog and de Meuron – architects of Fußball Arena München and the 'Bird's Nest' National Stadium in Beijing – and because of its steep stands, the noise generated can make a 36,000-capacity crowd seem much larger.

Tennis legend Roger Federer is one of Basel's most famous fans, and as a sporting venue, the city has long had international appeal. The original stadium on the site was built for the 1954 FIFA World Cup, and while the modern incarnation may be holding its first European final, Baslers were witness to four European Cup Winners' Cup finals between 1969 and 1984. The city also has a special place in FC Barcelona hearts: former Basel captain Joan Gamper founded the Catalan club, who lifted their first UEFA trophy at the old ground – 4-3 after extra time against Fortuna Düsseldorf in the 1979 European Cup Winners' Cup.

2015									
August		September		October		November		December	
Play-offs		Group stage							
First leg	20 th	Matchday one	17 th	Matchday two	1 st	Matchday four	5 th	Matchday six	10 th
Second leg	27 th			Matchday three	22 nd	Matchday five	26 th	Round of 32 draw	14 th
Group stage draw	28 th								

2016				
January	February	March	April	May
	Round of 32	Round of 16	Quarter-finals	Semi-finals
	First leg 18 th	First leg 10 th	First leg 7 th	Second leg 5 th
	Second leg 25 th	Second leg 17 th	Second leg 14 th	
	Round of 16 draw 26 th	Quarter-final draw 18 th	Semi-final draw 15 th	Final 18 th
			Semi-final first leg 28 th	

Roll of honour

2015	Sevilla FC	2000	Galatasaray AŞ	1985	Real Madrid CF
2014	Sevilla FC	1999	Parma FC	1984	Tottenham Hotspur FC
2013	Chelsea FC	1998	FC Internazionale Milano	1983	RSC Anderlecht
2012	Club Atlético de Madrid	1997	FC Schalke 04	1982	IFK Göteborg
2011	FC Porto	1996	FC Bayern München	1981	Ipswich Town FC
2010	Club Atlético de Madrid	1995	Parma FC	1980	Eintracht Frankfurt
2009	FC Shakhtar Donetsk	1994	FC Internazionale Milano	1979	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
2008	FC Zenit	1993	Juventus	1978	PSV Eindhoven
2007	Sevilla FC	1992	AFC Ajax	1977	Juventus
2006	Sevilla FC	1991	FC Internazionale Milano	1976	Liverpool FC
2005	PFC CSKA Moskva	1990	Juventus	1975	VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach
2004	Valencia CF	1989	SSC Napoli	1974	Feyenoord
2003	FC Porto	1988	Bayer 04 Leverkusen	1973	Liverpool FC
2002	Feyenoord	1987	IFK Göteborg	1972	Tottenham Hotspur FC
2001	Liverpool FC	1986	Real Madrid CF		

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Printing Identity

This publication is issued by the UEFA President
and Executive Office (Communications) in
coordination with the National Associations,
Competitions, Operations and Marketing divisions.



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