

Olympiacos CFP v Olympique Lyonnais PRESS KIT



Georgios Karaiskakis, Athens
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Group F - Matchday 4

Match preview

Houllier wary of Olympiacos 'danger'

It took a late strike from Olympique Lyonnais forward Sidney Govou to condemn a surprisingly spirited Olympiacos CFP to a 2-1 defeat a fortnight ago, but coach Trond Sollied believes a repeat performance in Athens on Tuesday will be enough to thwart the Group F leaders as the Greek team look to take their first points in the competition.

Taking heart

Olympiacos lost their opening three matches – against Rosenborg BK, Real Madrid CF and Lyon – and need to beat their French visitors to remain in contention, at least mathematically, for a place in the knockout phase. Sollied is taking heart from encouraging displays at Lyon and Madrid as well as a 2-1 win at Apollon Kalamarias on Saturday which helped Olympiacos retain second place in the Alpha Ethniki.

'Deserved better'

"We have to be optimistic and try to repeat our performance against Lyon in France, to be able to win," Sollied said. "We have been playing quite well recently but we just haven't been getting the positive results. We feel we deserve more than zero points." Only two sides in UEFA Champions League history have reached the knockout stages after losing their first three games - and the Norwegian trainer, while recognising the size of the task ahead, insists Olympiacos must fight on.

No surrender

"I'm very realistic and, the fact is, only two teams with zero points at this stage have gone through, but as long as we have a mathematical chance of qualifying we have to fight on," he said. "We have one target now and that is to beat Lyon, and the only way we can do that is by not repeating certain errors and making the most of our good moments."

'We still want to qualify'

Ivory Coast midfielder Yaya Touré echoed Sollied's view: "We know we are in a difficult situation, but we still want to qualify and we will do everything in our power to achieve this goal." A crowd pleaser since his summer arrival, Touré added: "We should have taken at least two points from the matches against Real Madrid and Lyon."

Casualty list

Sollied will be without defenders Mihalios Kapsis and Anastasios Pantos through injury, while striker Mihalios Konstantinou suffered a groin problem on Monday night and goalkeeper Antonios Nikopolidis has succumbed to flu. Kleopas Giannou should deputise in goal, with either Haruna Babangida or Ieroklis Stoltidis filling the gap left by Konstantinou, who scored at the weekend along with Ioannis Okkas. Grigorios Georgatos and Erol Bulut vie for the left-back slot.



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Houllier demand

For his part, Lyon coach Gérard Houllier has urged his players to "give everything they have" as they seek to maintain their 100 per cent record in the competition, even though he hinted that a draw would be enough for his men to qualify.

'A dangerous animal'

"I believe ten points will see us through, although that wasn't enough for Olympiacos last season," he said. Houllier is taking nothing for granted, however, and is well aware that Olympiacos are playing with their backs to the wall. "They are dangerous because they will be playing their last hand to qualify and will do everything to win. We need a positive result in order to play our remaining two matches with peace of mind."

Will to win

Meanwhile, Florent Malouda, Saturday's match-winner against FC Sochaux-Montbéliard in Ligue 1, said Lyon are in Athens "to play our game and win". Houllier is not expected to make changes to the team that beat Olympiacos in France, although Jérémy Berthod is a doubt on the left side of defence.