



# 2009 UEFA EUROPEAN WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

## MATCH PREVIEW



Germany



Iceland

Tampere Stadium, Tampere

Sunday 30 August 2009 - 15.00CET (16.00 local time)

Group B - Matchday 3

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## Germany ready to experiment

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Coach Silvia Neid has admitted she is prepared to experiment in Germany's final Group B outing against Iceland on Sunday.

### **Outsider chance**

Having comfortably secured first place in the section and a quarter-final berth after wins over Norway and France, Neid is ready to use the tournament holders' final group game as an opportunity to involve some of the fringe members of her squad. Nevertheless, the trainer rejects the notion of having an "A and B side" within her 22-strong squad, insisting every player who travelled with her to Finland can contribute to the UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2005™ winners' title defence.

### **'Fortunate fact'**

Two changes are certain, with midfield duo Linda Bresonik and Kim Kulig - both of whom already have Carlsberg Player of the Match awards to their name - both carrying bookings and set to be rested as a precautionary measure. Elsewhere, though, only goalkeeper Nadine Angerer can be sure of starting her third match at the finals. "We will certainly consider making some changes," said Neid. "It wouldn't make sense to risk the players who already have one yellow card, like Kim and Linda. It's a fortunate fact for us that we have many good players. It's a big part of a coach's job to decide who needs a rest and who, perhaps, needs some more game time, so that's what I have to do."

### **Crucial experience**

In the Iceland camp, meanwhile, the overwhelming feeling is one of hope for the future of women's football in the Nordic nation as they prepare for the farewell match of the country's first major finals appearance. Despite defeats to France and Norway, Iceland coach Sigi Eyrjólfsón believes the experience of competing at UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2009™ can serve his side well for years to come, and propel the game in Iceland to the next level.

### **'Future bright'**

"Obviously, it would be a big boost to our confidence to get a result against Germany, but it will always be extremely difficult when you play against the world and European champions," Eyrjólfsón said. "Regardless of Sunday's match, though, the key thing is that the future is bright for Icelandic women's football. We haven't been outplayed by anyone yet and I think both our defeat by France [3-1] and Norway [1-0] were quite even. We know we have some things we need to improve, but I really feel that if we can continue to get young girls playing the game, we have a real chance for the future."

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## Impatient Laudehr eager to shine

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A stalwart of Germany's 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup winning side, Simone Laudehr should have been one of the first names on Silvia Neid's team sheet at UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2009™. Until, that is, a knee ligament injury – sustained in a pre-tournament friendly against Russia on 6 August – put paid to the 23-year-old's hopes of starting the tournament where she left off two years ago.

### Burning wish

Laudehr, scorer of her country's second goal in the 2-0 final victory over Brazil in Shanghai, is a midfielder of many gifts; competent on the ball and equally intelligent in her movement off it. As the FCR 2001 Duisburg player herself admits, she does not count patience among her virtues, but her wish for a place in the starting XI could be granted as Neid prepares to experiment in Germany's final Group B outing against Iceland.

### Time needed

Watching the Mannschaft's first game in Finland from the sidelines, after seven weeks of intensive preparation, was a testing experience for Lauder, as her coach fully appreciates. "She's handling the situation as well as she can, but it's obvious that she is among the candidates who need more time to play," said Neid.

### Just reward

Making her tournament debut as a half-time substitute against France, however, was the ideal tonic for Laudehr. True to form, she also opened her account with a typically well-timed run into the penalty area and a precise finish to cap off the 5-1 victory. "I just hit the ball without thinking too much, it was a nice goal," the 2008/09 UEFA Women's Cup winner told uefa.com. "At the beginning I was still struggling a bit as I had problems getting my breath, but I really had fun, I had even a few shots on goal and some crosses."

### Able deputy

The next step is to show Neid that she is ready to retake her place in central midfield, where Kim Kulig has proved a more than competent understudy, as her Carlsberg Player of the Match award against Norway emphasised. "Simone couldn't do any football-specific training over the last two weeks so, of course, she will need some more time to get back to her best," Neid added.

### 'Fit enough'

Laudehr, burning to showcase her talents once again, is willing to fill in wherever needed: "I've played on the wings or sometimes in defensive midfield, but it's up to the coach where she wants to field me. I just want to play." Although a one-to-one chat with her trainer has reassured her she still has a bigger part to play at these finals. "That was extremely important to me," the No6 added. "Maybe I'm now fit enough for 90 minutes."

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## Vidarsdóttir eyes parting gift

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Striker Margrét Lára Vidarsdóttir believes it is high time fortune smiled on Iceland as they aim to get their first points on the board in their farewell to UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2009™.

### **Slim margin**

The Nordic nation have given a good account of themselves in their two Group B outings to date. But, conceding twice from penalties — with a spot-kick of their own missed by Vidarsdóttir herself — in the 3-1 defeat by France and a narrow 1-0 loss to Norway, in which they came painfully close to equalising on more than one occasion, sealed an early exit from their first major finals.

### **Disappointing campaign**

Vidarsdóttir, who arrived in Finland as the top scorer in qualification with 12 goals, makes no attempt to hide her disappointment at how her side's campaign has unfolded. She is, however, determined to help ensure Iceland give their loyal band of travelling fans something to cheer about against a Germany side that have already firmly anchored their place in the quarter-final as winners of the section.

### **'Tough game'**

"We knew France and Norway were both great teams, but, the thing is, we created quite a few chances against them," the Kristianstads DFF forward said. "We haven't been outplayed, but, sometimes, things haven't quite gone for us. As a striker, maybe things don't go for you; the ball doesn't drop or, sometimes, a couple of centimetres can make all the difference. You can always find an excuse if you want one. But the important thing is to make sure you're doing your job in the team. Perhaps, it's just that little bit of luck that we've been missing. I hope we have it against Germany because this will certainly be a very tough game."

### **'Great experience'**

Having spent three months at Frauen-Bundesliga club FCR 2001 Duisburg in season 2006/07, Vidarsdóttir knows better than most the scale of her side's task on Sunday, even if Germany rest key players. "I played with five members of their current team and they are all fantastic," the 23-year-old said. "They have so many great players and to work there every day was a great experience. I'm grateful to have had the chance and I feel it made me a better player. Hopefully I can show that against Germany."