UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2018/19 SEASON
MATCH PRESS KITS

Arsenal FC

Arsenal Stadium - London
Thursday 8 November 2018
21.00CET (20.00 local time)
Group E - Matchday 4

Sporting Clube de Portugal

Last updated 07/11/2018 03:52CET

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Match background

With maximum points from their opening three fixtures in UEFA Europa League Group E, Arsenal already have the round of 32 firmly in their sights as they seek to complete the double over the second-placed side in the section, Sporting CP. A repeat win would guarantee the Gunners' place in the round of 32, while a draw would do if Vorskla Poltava lose at home to point-less Qarabağ.

• Arsenal have beaten all three of their group rivals, opening up with a 4-2 success at home to Vorskla before posting back-to-back away wins at Qarabağ (3-0) and Sporting (1-0), Danny Welbeck driving home the late winner in Lisbon.

• Sporting followed their opening 2-0 home win against the champions of Azerbaijan by snatching victory from the jaws of defeat with two late goals at Vorskla (2-1).

Previous meetings
• Despite the clubs' considerable European pedigree, they had never met in UEFA competition until matchday three. They did, however, come face to face in the 1969/70 Inter-Cities Fairs Cup second round, Arsenal winning 3-0 on aggregate (0-0 away, 3-0 home) en route to lifting the trophy.

• Sporting's 22 UEFA fixtures against English clubs have yielded nine wins and ten defeats. They have won just twice in 11 visits to England (D2 L7) and have failed to win any of their last six matches in the country (D1 L5).

• Arsenal had never won in five previous UEFA visits to Portugal until their 25 October victory (D2 L3), but at home they have won their last four matches against Portuguese visitors, scoring 17 goals without reply.

Form guide
Arsenal
• The Gunners finished sixth in the 2017/18 Premier League – their lowest final placing under Arsène Wenger in his swansong season as manager after 22 years. It earned them a second successive qualification for the UEFA Europa League group stage.

• UEFA Champions League ever-presents for 19 successive seasons until last term, Arsenal reached the UEFA Europa League semi-finals at the first attempt, going out to eventual winners Atlético Madrid.

• The 1999/2000 UEFA Cup runners-up also had nine points out of nine on their UEFA Europa League debut last term before their perfect record ended on matchday four with a 0-0 draw at home to Crvena zvezda. Their UEFA Europa League record in London is W5 D2 L1, with 22 goals scored and eight conceded, but they have not kept a clean sheet in any of their last five home fixtures in the competition.

Sporting
• Sporting finished third in the 2017/18 Portuguese Liga. They suffered a shock 2-1 defeat to Aves in the Portuguese Cup final, but nevertheless claimed a place in the UEFA Europa League group stage.

• The Lisbon club have been regular participants in the UEFA Europa League since its inception in 2009/10, featuring in the competition proper in seven previous seasons and the group stage in five of those, most recently in 2015/16. Semi-finalists in 2011/12, they reached the quarter-finals last season after transferring from the UEFA Champions League group stage.

• Sporting's UEFA Europa League group stage record away from Lisbon is W6 D1 L9. They have not kept a clean sheet in any of their last 30 European away fixtures, since beating FC Zürich 2-0 on matchday one of the 2011/12 UEFA Europa League group stage.

Links and trivia
• Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno helped Bayer Leverkusen defeat Sporting twice in the 2015/16 UEFA Europa League round of 16, winning 1-0 in Lisbon and 3-1 in Germany to eliminate the Portuguese club.

• Sporting trio Nani (Manchester United), Sebastián Coates (Liverpool, Sunderland) and Radosav Petrović (Blackburn) have all faced Arsenal in the Premier League, Nani winning the competition four times and scoring a memorable goal against the Gunners in a famous 8-2 win at Old Trafford in August 2011.

• Coates and Arsenal's Lucas Torreira are Uruguayan internationals; Torreira is also a former team-mate of Sporting's Bruno Fernandes (Sampdoria, 2016/17).

• Alexandre Lacazette (Arsenal) and Jérémy Mathieu (Sporting) have played together for France.

• Arsenal are one of six clubs with maximum points from the opening three UEFA Europa League fixtures, the others being Zürich (Group A), Salzburg (B), Dinamo Zagreb (D), Eintracht Frankfurt (H) and Chelsea (L).

The coaches
• After two years with Paris Saint-Germain that yielded seven domestic trophies, Unai Emery was appointed as

Arsenal manager in May 2018, replacing the long-serving Wenger. The Spaniard oversaw Sevilla's historic hat-trick of successes in the UEFA Europa League from 2013/14 to 2015/16, having assumed control following a four-year tenure at Valencia and a brief stint at Spartak Moskva. He has been in charge of more UEFA Europa League games than any other coach.

• Appointed as caretaker to replace recently dismissed coach José Peseiro, Tiago Fernandes is the son of Sporting CP legend Manuel Fernandes and had a modest playing career as a midfielder before becoming a scout and assistant to his father at UD Leiria and Vitória FC. He joined Sporting as a youth coach in 2012 and led the Under-19s to the Portuguese title in 2016/17, the same season they took part in the UEFA Youth League group stage, becoming an assistant to Peseiro at the start of this season.

Legend

Competitions

Club competitions

UCL: UEFA Champions League
ECCC: European Champion Clubs' Cup
UEL: UEFA Europa League
UCUP: UEFA Cup
UCWC: UEFA Cup Winners' Cup
SCUP: UEFA Super Cup
UIC: UEFA Intertoto Cup
ICF: Inter-Cities Fairs Cup

National team competitions

EURO: UEFA European Football Championship
WC: FIFA World Cup
CONFCUP: FIFA Confederations Cup
FRIE: Friendly internationals
U21FRIE: Under-21 friendly internationals
U21: UEFA European Under-21 Championship
U17: UEFA Under-17 Championship
U16: UEFA European Under-16 Championship
U19: UEFA Under-19 Championship
U18: UEFA European Under-18 Championship
WWC: FIFA Women's World Cup
WEURO: UEFA European Women's Championship

Competition stages

F: Final
GS1: First group stage
3QR: Third qualifying round
R2: Second round
R4: Fourth round
SF: Semi-finals
R16: round of 16
R32: Round of 32
1st: first leg

2nd: second leg
PO: Play-off
Rep: Replay
PO - FT: Play-off for Final Tournament

GS: Group stage
GS2: Second group stage
R1: First round
R3: Third round
PR: Preliminary round
QF: Quarter-finals
QR: Qualifying round
1QR: First qualifying round
2QR: Second qualifying round
FT: Final tournament
ELITE: Elite round
3rdPO: Third-place play-off
GS-FT: Group stage – final tournament

Other abbreviations

(aet): After extra time
No.: Number
ag: Match decided on away goals
Pld: Matches played
Pos.: Position
Pts: Points
R: Sent off (straight red card)
Res.: Result
sg: Match decided by silver goal

GF: Goals for
gg: Match decided by golden goal
Y/R: Sent off (two yellow cards)
f: Match forfeited

pens: Penalties
og: Own goal
P: Penalty
agg: Aggregate
AP: Appearances
Comp.: Competition
D: Drawn
DoB: Date of birth
ET: Extra Time
GA: Goals against
t: Match decided by toss of a coin
W: Won
Y: Booked
L: Lost
Nat.: Nationality
N/A: Not applicable

Statistics

-: Denotes player substituted
*: Denotes player sent off

+: Denotes player introduced
+/-: Denotes player introduced and substituted

Squad list

D: Disciplinary
*: Misses next match if booked
S: Suspended
QUAL: All UEFA qualifiers
UEL: Current season total UEFA Europa League appearances from the group stage onwards prior to the current matchday
UEL: Total appearances in the UEFA Europa League, group stage to final only
UEFA: All-time total appearances in UEFA club competition including qualifying
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