UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2019/20 SEASON
MATCH PRESS KITS

Astana Arena - Nur–Sultan
Thursday 3 October 2019
16.50CET (20.50 local time)
Group L - Matchday 2

Last updated 01/10/2019 20:30CET

Match background
Legend
Two teams that began their 2019/20 UEFA Europa League campaign in the second qualifying round go head to head in search of much-needed Group L points as Astana welcome Serbian Cup winners Partizan to the capital of Kazakhstan.

• While Astana battled gamely in a 1-0 defeat by Manchester United at Old Trafford on matchday one, Partizan were held 2-2 at home by AZ Alkmaar despite a goal in each half from experienced UEFA Europa League campaigner Bibras Natcho.

Previous meetings
• Astana have yet to face a Serbian club in UEFA competition, while this is also Partizan's first official encounter with opposition from Kazakhstan.

Form guide
Astana
• Astana collected their fifth straight domestic title in 2018 while also playing no fewer than 16 European matches in that calendar year, the last six in the UEFA Europa League group stage, where they finished third with eight points. This season they have again come through four summer qualifying ties, the first of them a defeat by CFR Cluj in the UEFA Champions League, before eventually squeezing past BATE Borisov in the UEFA Europa League play-offs (3-0 h, 0-2 a).
• Astana's maiden UEFA Europa League group campaign in 2016/17 ended unsuccessfully with five points, but they doubled that number the following season to finish second in their section and qualify for a first ever crack at springtime European football. It lasted just two matches, Sporting CP overcoming them 6-4 on aggregate in the round of 32.
• Astana won all four of their home qualifiers this summer, scoring 13 goals and conceding two, and have emerged victorious from nine of their last 11 European home games. Their home record in the UEFA Europa League group stage is W4 D3 L2.

Partizan
• Third in the Serbian Superliga last term, Partizan won the domestic cup for the fourth year running, defeating league champions Crvena zvezda 1-0 in the final. In Europe they came through three UEFA Europa League qualifiers before losing out to Beşiktaş in the play-offs (1-1 h, 0-3 a).
• This season Partizan entered the competition a round later, defeating Connah's Quay and Malatyaspor and edging past Norwegian side Molde in the play-offs (2-1 h, 1-1 a) to book a sixth group stage berth. After failing to gain further progress on their first four attempts, the Serbian side succeeded on their most recent participation, in 2017/18, falling in the round of 32 to Viktoria Plzeň (1-1 h, 0-2 a).
• Partizan have lost ten of their 15 away fixtures in the UEFA Europa League group stage, winning just two, both in the 2015/16 season and both, curiously, at teams beginning with the letter ‘A’ – Augsburg (3-1) and AZ Alkmaar (2-1).

Links and trivia
• Astana's Antonio Rukavina is a Serbian international who played for Partizan in 2007 and captained the Belgrade club.
• Rukavina and fellow Serbian international Zoran Tošić (Partizan) are godfathers to each other's children.
• Although he plays international football for Kazakhstan, Astana goalkeeper Nenad Erić was born in Serbia and began his career there.
• Partizan's Vladimir Stojković was in goal for Serbia when Kazakhstan claimed their first competitive win as a UEFA member in a 2-1 UEFA EURO 2008 qualifying victory in Almaty on 24 March 2007.
• Partizan is the fifth club that Israeli international Natcho has represented in the UEFA Europa League. His next appearance in the competition, group stage to final, will be his 50th.
• Astana's Croatian import Marin Tomasov scored seven goals in this season's UEFA Europa League qualifying phase – a total bettered only by Rangers' Alfredo Morelos (eight).

The coaches
• A free-scoring Ukrainian striker, Roman Hryhorchuk has made his name as a coach in eastern Europe, starting out in Latvia, where he won three league titles and two domestic cups during a four-year spell with Ventspils. He went on to coach Chornomorets Odesa in his homeland and Azerbaijan's Gabala for similar periods, overseeing UEFA Europa League group stage campaigns for both, before replacing Stanimir Stoilov at Kazakh champions Astana in June 2018.
He missed the latter weeks of the club's league title triumph for personal reasons but has been back in harness this year.

- Short of managerial experience but a key figure at the club with whom he started his career in the early 1990s, Savo Milošević was appointed as Partizan's head coach in March 2019 and within less than two months had steered the Belgrade club to victory in the Serbian Cup. A powerful left-footed striker, he scored 37 goals in 102 international appearances, five of them for Yugoslavia at UEFA EURO 2000, where he was the tournament's joint top marksman. He left Partizan for Aston Villa in 1995 and later played in Spain (Zaragoza, Espanyol, Celta Vigo, Osasuna) and Italy (Parma) before ending his career with a Russian league title at Rubin.
**FC Astana - FK Partizan**

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**Astana Arena, Nur–Sultan**

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**Legend**

**Competitions**

**Club competitions**

- **UCL:** UEFA Champions League
- **ECCC:** European Champion Clubs' Cup
- **UEFA:** 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

**Other abbreviations**

- **F:** Final
- **Q:** Quarter-final
- **R:** Round
- **P:** Preliminary
- **FT:** Final tournament
- **GS:** Group stage
- **R16:** Round of 16
- **R2:** Second round
- **Rep:** Replay
- **PO:** Play-off
- **2nd:** Second leg
- **3rdPO:** Third-place play-off
- **3QR:** Third qualifying round
- **R3:** Third round
- **ELITE:** Elite round
- **GS1:** First group stage
- **SF:** Semi-finals
- **1st:** First leg
- **R4:** Fourth round
- **QF:** Quarter-finals
- **R:** Round
- **REP:** Replay
- **PO - FT:** Play-off for Final Tournament
- **1QR:** First qualifying round
- **2QR:** Second qualifying round
- **1st:** First leg
- **2nd:** Second leg
- **PO:** Play-off
- **Rep:** Replay
- **PO - FT:** Play-off for Final Tournament
- **FS:** Friendly internationals
- **U17:** UEFA Under-17 Championship
- **U16:** UEFA European Under-16 Championship
- **U19:** UEFA Under-19 Championship
- **U18:** UEFA European Under-18 Championship
- **W:** Won
- **L:** Lost
- **Y/R:** Sent off (two yellow cards)
- **D:** Disciplinary
- **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

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