# UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2019/20 SEASON

## MATCH PRESS KITS

**ADO DEN HAAAG STADIUM - Den Haag**

**Thursday 24 October 2019**

18.55CET (18.55 local time)

Group L - Matchday 3

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### AZ Alkmaar

Last updated 21/10/2019 14:34CET

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### Legend

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AZ Alkmaar and Astana have ground to make up in Group L, with a first victory in the section the objective for both clubs as they meet on Matchday 3 in The Hague.

• While AZ have drawn their opening two fixtures, holding Partizan 2-2 in Serbia and Manchester United 0-0 in the Netherlands, Astana have fallen to successive defeats, going down 1-0 at Old Trafford then 2-1 in the capital of Kazakhstan to Partizan.

Previous meetings
• This is Astana’s first UEFA encounter against Dutch opposition.

• AZ have won all three of their previous home games against visitors from Kazakhstan – all in Alkmaar – but have unhappy memories of the most recent, a 2-1 victory at home to Kairat Almaty in last season’s UEFA Europa League second qualifying round that proved in vain after a 2-0 first-leg defeat.

Form guide
AZ
• Fourth in the 2018/19 Eredivisie at the end of a campaign that started with that shock European defeat by Kairat, AZ are one of three Dutch clubs in this season’s group stage, alongside PSV and Feyenoord.

• The Alkmaar club’s six group stage participations have all required pre-qualification and this season they negotiated more summer preliminary ties than ever before, three in total, knocking out BK Häcken, Mariupol and, after extra time in the play-offs, Antwerp (1-1 h, 4-1 a). They have progressed to the knockout phase on three occasions, reaching the quarter-finals in 2011/12 and 2013/14 and the round of 32 in 2016/17.

• AZ are unbeaten in Europe this season (W3 D5). Their all-time home record in UEFA Europa League group stage matches is W7 D5 L4 – though they have lost three of the last six (W1 D2).

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 again came 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.

• A 4-0 win in Malta against Valletta in this season’s UEFA Europa League third qualifying round is Astana’s only victory in their last 11 European away matches (D4 L6). In the group stage their record outside Kazakhstan is W2 D2 L6.

Links and trivia
• Romanian international Dorin Rotariu moved to Astana in the summer after playing eight Eredivisie games on loan for AZ last season.

• Astana’s Curacao international striker Rangelo Janga was born in Rotterdam and played for Dutch clubs Willem II, Excelsior and Dordrecht.

• Astana’s Aleksandr Mokin and Sergei Khizhnichenko played for Shakhter Karagandy in a 1-1 draw at home to AZ in the 2013/14 UEFA Europa League group stage, though neither featured in the return match in Alkmaar (0-1).

• 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
• When John van den Brom ended his five-year stint as AZ’s head coach by moving to Utrecht in summer 2019, his job was passed on to assistant Arne Slot, whose first task was to steer the Alkmaar club through three qualifying rounds into the UEFA Europa League group stage. This is his first post as a head coach although he is a well-known former player in the Netherlands having operated in the Eredivisie for NAC Breda, Sparta Rotterdam and PEC Zwolle, where he started both his playing and coaching careers, the latter in charge of the youth side in 2013/14.

• 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.

**FootballPeople weeks**
The FootballPeople weeks take place from 10 to 24 October 2019 and are organised by UEFA's social responsibility partner Fare. The weeks are a global campaign aimed at tackling discrimination and celebrating diversity in football. The UEFA Europa League is offering its full support to the FootballPeople weeks; teams will line up for a mixed photo with the referees, while an EqualGame hashtag will also be on display. Videos will be played on giant screens at stadiums across Europe, and child mascots will be wearing #FootballPeople t-shirts. UEFA's collaboration with the Fare network's FootballPeople weeks has been running since 2001. The aim of this initiative fits in perfectly with the goals of #EqualGame, which is looking to promote inclusion, diversity and accessibility.
Legend

Competition stages

| F: Final | GS: Group stage | (aet): After extra time |
| GS1: First group stage | GS2: Second group stage | No.: Number |
| 3QR: Third qualifying round | R1: First round | ag: Match decided on away goals |
| R2: Second round | R3: Third round | Pld: Matches played |
| R4: Fourth round | PR: Preliminary round | Pos.: Position |
| SF: Semi-finals | QF: Quarter-finals | Pts: Points |
| R16: round of 16 | QR: Qualifying round | R: Sent off (straight red card) |
| R32: Round of 32 | 1QR: First qualifying round | Res.: Result |
| 1st: first leg | 2QR: Second qualifying round | sg: Match decided by silver goal |
| 2nd: second leg | FT: Final tournament | GF: Goals for |
| PO: Play-off | ELITE: Elite round | gg: Match decided by golden goal |
| Rep: Replay | 3rdPO: Third-place play-off | Y/R: Sent off (two yellow cards) |
| PO - FT: Play-off for Final Tournament | GS-FT: Group stage – final tournament | f: Match forfeited |

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: Current season total UEFA Europa League appearances from the group stage onwards prior to the current matchday
UEFA: All-time total appearances in UEFA club competition including qualifying

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