Match background

Legend
Match background

The perennial champions of Cyprus and Azerbaijan meet for the fourth time this season, reconvening in Nicosia a fortnight after sharing the points in Baku – a 2-2 draw in which both teams led. That result keeps Qarabağ second in Group A with four points to their name and APOEL at the bottom of the table with just one.

- Qarabağ responded to an opening 0-3 defeat at home to Sevilla with a 4-1 win against Dudelange in Luxembourg before drawing with APOEL in Baku, a first point in the section for the team from Cyprus following narrow defeats by Dudelange (3-4 h) and Sevilla (0-1 a).

Previous meetings

- There were away wins for both clubs when they met for the first time in August in the UEFA Champions League third qualifying round. Qarabağ emerged 2-1 victors from the first leg in Cyprus but APOEL, having replaced Paolo Tramezzani as coach with Thomas Doll between the two legs, took the tie with a 2-0 success in Baku.

- Those were Qarabağ’s first matches against Cypriot opposition, whereas APOEL had played two previous qualifying ties against another Baku-based side, Neftçi, winning the first, in the 1995/96 UEFA Cup Winners’ Cup preliminary round (3-0 on aggregate), and losing the second, in the 2012/13 UEFA Europa League play-offs (2-4 agg). The Nicosia club have lost their last two home games against visitors from Azerbaijan.

Form guide

APOEL

- Cypriot champions a record 28 times, APOEL made it seven national titles in a row with last season’s triumph, which came at the end of a campaign in which they were absent from Europe in the autumn for the first time in six years having lost their UEFA Europe League play-off against Astana on penalties.

- This season, having comfortably eliminated Montenegro’s Sutjeska in the UEFA Champions League second qualifying round (1-0 a, 3-0 h), APOEL ensured a return to European group stage football with that comeback win against Qarabağ. They were then defeated 2-0 on aggregate by Ajax in the play-offs (0-0 h, 0-2 a) to move into the UEFA Europa League.

- APOEL failed to reach the knockout phase in their first two UEFA Europa League group participations (in 2013/14 and 2015/16) but made it all the way to the round of 16 on their most recent appearance, in 2016/17, having topped their group thanks to a maximum haul of nine points at home. Their all-time record in Nicosia in UEFA Europa League group games is W5 D1 L4.

Qarabağ

- Qarabağ were crowned champions of Azerbaijan for the sixth season running in 2018/19 – and seventh overall – having finished eight points clear of runners-up Neftçi. They also made it to a fifth successive European group stage, in the UEFA Europa League, but lost five of their six matches.

- This season, as in 2018/19, Qarabağ began their European journey in the UEFA Champions League first qualifying round but were eliminated two rounds later by APOEL before an away-goals win against Linfield in the UEFA Europa League play-offs (2-3 a, 2-1 h). They have never extended their European involvement into the spring.

- Qarabağ’s record outside Azerbaijan in the UEFA Europa League group stage is W4 D1 L8, with two of those wins having come in their last three matches. They have registered 1-0 victories in both of their previous away fixtures on Matchday 4 – against PAOK in 2016/17 and Vorskla Poltava in 2018/19.

Links and trivia

- Qarabağ’s Bulgarian midfielder Simeon Slavchev spent 2015/16 on loan at Apollon Limassol – where he was a team-mate of current APOEL defender Giorgos Merkis – and scored a penalty in a Cypriot Cup semi-final shoot-out win against APOEL. Having eliminated the holders, Apollon went on to beat Omonia in the final.

- Another Qarabağ player, Araz Abdullayev, spent 2017/18 in Cyprus on loan at Anorthosis. The Azeri midfielder was also in the Neftçi side that beat APOEL in the 2012/13 UEFA Europa League play-offs, coming off the bench in both matches.

- Qarabağ midfielder Richard Almeida was a member of the Astana side that knocked APOEL out of last season’s UEFA Europa League play-offs, scoring the Kazakh club’s first penalty in a 2-1 shoot-out success.

- Antonio Jakoliš (APOEL) and Filip Ozobić (Qarabağ) played together for various Croatian youth selections and also for Hajduk Split in 2013.

- APOEL’s Serbian striker Andrija Pavlović scored for Copenhagen in a 2-1 home win against Qarabağ in the 2017/18 UEFA Champions League play-offs.
• Qarabağ have now gone a whole year without losing a domestic league fixture – a run of 30 matches. Their last defeat in the Premyer Liqa was on 28 October 2018 (1-3 at Neftçi).

The coaches
• A gifted attacking midfielder who played for both East Germany and the unified German national side, scoring a total of eight goals in 47 full internationals, Doll won two Oberliga titles with BFC Dynamo and later plied his trade in both the Bundesliga and Serie A, where he spent three seasons at Lazio. Doll hit the ground running as a coach with former club Hamburg, but was less successful at Borussia Dortmund before he reasserted his credentials during a five-year spell in Hungary with Ferencváros. He was appointed APOEL coach in August 2019.

• Qarabağ boss Gurban Gurbanov is Azerbaijan's highest-scoring international with 12 goals in 64 matches. While he regularly changed club as a player, he celebrated 11 years as head coach of Qarabağ in August 2019, during which time he has led the club to six successive national league titles, four Azerbaijani Cups and European group stage involvement in each of the last six seasons, including a maiden UEFA Champions League adventure in 2017/18. He doubled up as the coach of Azerbaijan from January to December 2018.
APOEL FC - Qarabağ FK
Match press kit
Thursday 7 November 2019 - 18.55CET (19.55 local time)
GSP Stadium, Nicosia

Legend

Club competitions

UCL: UEFA Champions League
ECCC: European Champion Clubs' Cup
UEFA Europa League
UCR: UEFA Cup
UECWC: UEFA Cup Winners' Cup
UECUP: UEFA Super Cup
UIC: UEFA Intertoto Cup
ICF: Inter-Cities Fairs Cup

National team competitions

EURO: UEFA European Football Championship
WC: FIFA World Cup
CONFUC: 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
R1: First round
R3: Third round
PR: Preliminary 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
R: Sent off (straight red card)
R3: Third round
PR: Preliminary round
QF: Quarter-finals
R16: Round of 16
R32: Round of 32
1QUR: First qualifying round
2QR: Second qualifying round
FT: Final tournament
ELITE: Elite round
3rdPO: Third-place play-off
GS-FT: Group stage – final tournament

(aet): After extra time
No.: Number
og: Own goal
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

Other abbreviations

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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