VfL Wolfsburg

VfL Wolfsburg Arena - Wolfsburg
Thursday 7 November 2019
21.00CET (21.00 local time)
Group I - Matchday 4

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Match background
Legend
Match background

It has been difficult to separate Wolfsburg and Gent in Group I, the two undefeated clubs having registered the same number of points on each matchday, including the 2-2 draw between them in Belgium last time out, but victory for either team in the return fixture would put them in a strong position to qualify for the knockout phase.

• Both clubs won at home on Matchday 1 before drawing away two weeks later. Wolfsburg kicked off their campaign by beating Olexandriya 3-1 in Germany and then shared the spoils at St-Étienne (1-1), while Gent beat the French club 3-2 before holding Olexandriya 1-1 in Ukraine. It was a Ukrainian, Roman Yaremchuk, who rescued a point for Gent on Matchday 3 by scoring both goals, the second deep into added time, after visitors Wolfsburg had led through Wout Weghorst and João Victor.

Previous meetings

• The teams previously met in the 2015/16 UEFA Champions League round of 16, the first time either club had reached that stage of the competition. Wolfsburg won both matches, a 3-2 away victory in the first leg for Dieter Hecking’s side preceding a 1-0 success at home.

• Those were Wolfsburg’s only previous matches against a Belgian club prior to Matchday 3, whereas Gent have played four others against German opposition, winning both ties against Eintracht Frankfurt in the 1991/92 UEFA Cup second round and Werder Bremen in the 2001 UEFA Intertoto Cup third round thanks to victories in Germany.

Form guide

Wolfsburg

• A sixth-placed finish in last season’s Bundesliga ensured Wolfsburg direct entry into the group stage and a first European campaign since they reached the quarter-finals of the UEFA Champions League in 2015/16.

• The German club are competing in the UEFA Europa League group stage for a second time, their 2014/15 campaign having ended in the quarter-finals at the hands of Napoli. They also reached the last eight in the competition’s inaugural 2009/10 season having finished third in their UEFA Champions League section.

• Quarter-finalists therefore in each of their last three European campaigns, Wolfsburg won all five home fixtures in the 2015/16 UEFA Champions League and have a UEFA Europa League home record of W6 D1 L3.

Gent

• Fifth in the 2018/19 Belgian top flight, and also runners-up in the domestic cup, Gent qualified for Europe for the fifth successive season, extending the longest sequence in the club’s history.

• Ousted in the qualifying phase of the UEFA Europa League in each of the past two seasons, they came through three ties to reach the group stage this term, defeating Romania’s Viitorul (6-3 h, 1-2 a), AEK Larnaca of Cyprus (1-1 a, 3-0 h) and, in the play-offs, Croatian club Rijeka (2-1 h, 1-1 a). Their two previous participations at this juncture of the competition had different outcomes, with elimination in 2010/11 and progress through to the round of 16 in 2016/17.

• Gent have won only once away in the UEFA Europa League, group stage to final (D4 L4) – a vital last-gasp 1-0 victory at Konyaspor on Matchday 6 in 2016/17 that took them through to the next round. They have drawn all three away fixtures in the competition since then.

Links and trivia

• There are four survivors at each club from that 2015/16 UEFA Champions League tie – Koen Casteels, Robin Knocke, Maximilian Arnold and Josuha Guilavogui for Wolfsburg, Laurent Depoitre, Nana Asare, Sven Kums and Brecht Dejaegere for Gent. Kums scored one of Gent’s goals in the first leg.

• Belgian Under-21 international goalkeeper Casteels started his career in his homeland with Genk, though he never played a senior game before moving to German side Hoffenheim in 2011.

• Gent skipper Vadis Odjidja had a short spell in Germany with Hamburg in 2008/09 after leaving his first club Anderlecht.

• Wolfsburg were unbeaten in all competitions this season – a run of 13 matches – until they crashed out of the German Cup on 30 October, losing 1-6 at home to RB Leipzig. They then made it two defeats in succession with a 3-0 Bundesliga loss at Borussia Dortmund three days later.

The coaches

• Austrian coach Oliver Glasner signed a three-year contract in the spring of 2019 to succeed Bruno Labbadia at Wolfsburg. He arrived in Germany with a growing reputation having led LASK Linz to a runners-up spot in the Austrian Bundesliga just two seasons after steering the club to promotion from the second tier. A former centre-back, Glasner spent virtually his entire career with Ried, with whom he won the Austrian Cup twice, in 1998 and 2011. He also spent
a season as the club's coach before joining LASK in 2015.

- A tall striker who spent most of his playing career in his native Denmark with OB and Esbjerg but also had short spells in Germany, Austria and Norway, Jess Thorup has lately become one of his country's most upwardly mobile coaches. After a two-year stint in charge of the Danish Under-21 side he became Midtjylland's head coach in 2015 and steered the Jutland club to the Superliga title in 2017/18. That prompted interest from abroad and he was recruited in October 2018 by Gent, whom he guided to a runners-up spot in the Belgian Cup and a fifth-placed finish in the league in his first 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
UCF: 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
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
GS-FT: Group stage – final tournament

(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

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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