UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2019/20 SEASON
MATCH PRESS KITS

Stadion Graz Liebenau - Graz
Thursday 28 November 2019
18.55CET (18.55 local time)
Group J - Matchday 5

Wolfsberger AC

VfL Borussia Mönchengladbach

Last updated 26/11/2019 19:51CET

Match background
Legend
Match background

UEFA Europa League group stage debutants Wolfsberg have the chance to show that their shock opening-night 4-0 win at Borussia Mönchengladbach was no flash in the pan as they renew acquaintance with the German side in Graz on an evening when the visitors could qualify for the round of 32 with a game to spare.

• While Wolfsberg have gone off the boil since that scorching start, adding just one more point to their total and dropping to the foot of the group after back-to-back defeats by İstanbul Başakşehir (0-1 a, 0-3 h), Mönchengladbach have got progressively better, though added-time goals have been responsible for earning four of their five points – equalisers away to İstanbul Başakşehir and Roma (both 1-1) and a 95th-minute Marcus Thuram winner at home to the Serie A side in their most recent outing.

A third successive defeat will eliminate Wolfsberg from contention for a round of 32 berth, whereas a Mönchengladbach victory coupled with a Roma defeat in Turkey would send the German Bundesliga leaders through.

Previous meetings

• The UEFA Europa League witnessed one of its most unexpected results on Matchday 1 as Wolfsberg inflicted a record home European defeat on Mönchengladbach thanks to unanswered strikes from Shon Weissman, Mario Leitgeb (two) and Marcel Ritzmaier.

• The Austrian side’s last European encounter prior to that win against Gladbach had also been away to German opposition, though the outcome was rather different as Borussia Dortmund beat them 5-0 to complete a 6-0 aggregate win in the 2015/16 UEFA Europa League third qualifying round.

• Mönchengladbach’s record against Austrian opposition is now W6 D1 L4, all ten matches prior to this season’s meeting having taken place during the 1970s. Their overall away record versus Austrian clubs is W2 L3, their last visit having also been to Graz, where they beat local side Sturm 2-1 to complete a 7-2 aggregate victory in the first round of the 1978/79 UEFA Cup, which they would go on to win.

Form guide

Wolfsberg

• Promoted to the Austrian top flight for the first time in 2012, Wolfsberg claimed their highest ever Bundesliga finish in 2018/19, taking third place behind champions Salzburg and runners-up LASK.

• The club’s only previous European campaign, in 2015/16, ended with that comprehensive defeat by Dortmund, though they had been victorious in both legs of their inaugural tie, beating Shakhtyor Soligorsk of Belarus 1-0 away and 2-0 at home.

• Wolfsberg’s overall European record is now W3 D1 L4. At home it is W1 D1 L2, with no wins in the last three matches.

Mönchengladbach

• A fifth-placed finish in the 2018/19 German Bundesliga booked a starting berth for Mönchengladbach in the UEFA Europa League group stage, returning the club to European competition after a two-season absence.

• Gladbach qualified from both of their previous UEFA Europa League groups, in 2012/13 and 2014/15, before going out each time in the round of 32. Having crossed over from the UEFA Champions League midway through the 2016/17 season, they made it third time lucky in that round with a spectacular Lars Stindl-inspired comeback triumph against Fiorentina (0-1 h, 4-2 a) before going out on away goals in an all-German round of 16 tie with Schalke (1-1 a, 2-2 h).

• The Foals have never lost an away fixture in the UEFA Europa League group stage (W2 D6). Their last European win on the road was that 4-2 success at Fiorentina, the three away fixtures since having all ended 1-1.

Links and trivia

• Gladbach’s Jonas Hofmann scored the winning goal for Dortmund away to Wolfsberg in that 2015/16 tie.

• Wolfsberg left-back Lukas Schmitz is German and has played for Schalke, Werder Bremen and Fortuna Düsseldorf. Eight of his 104 Bundesliga games were against Mönchengladbach.

• Schmitz’s Wolfsberg team-mates Stefan Perić and Michael Liendl have also played in Germany, while Dominik Baumgartner is on loan from Bochum.

• Wolfsberg are one of six clubs appearing in the UEFA Europa League group stage for the first time this season, the others being Espanyol, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Ferencváros, Olexandriya and fellow Austrian side LASK.

• Wolfsberg are one of two clubs whose starting XI has been unchanged for all four group stage fixtures thus far, the other being Gent in Group I. However, that can not continue as central defender Nemanja Rnić was red-carded on
Matchday 4 and is therefore suspended for this encounter.

• Mönchengladbach’s three-game winning run in the Bundesliga ended on Saturday with a surprise 0-2 defeat at newly-promoted Union Berlin but they remain on top of the table, one point ahead of RB Leipzig and Bayern München.

The coaches
• On 20 November, Wolfsberg head coach Gerhard Struber took over at Barnsley, in the English Championship. He has been replaced on an interim basis by Mohamed Sahli, a 40-year-old Austrian of Tunisian descent who was previously Struber’s assistant. Sahli’s career has been spent predominantly as a youth coach, overseeing the development of up-and-coming talents at Salzburg and Sturm Graz before working as a joint head coach with the Austrian Under-19 and U16 selections. He arrived at Wolfsberg in the summer of 2019.

• Rose replaced Dieter Hecking as Mönchengladbach’s new head coach for the 2019/20 season. He arrived as an Austrian double winner and two-time champion with Salzburg, having also led the club to victory in the 2016/17 UEFA Youth League. A defender with home-town club VfB Leipzig, Hannover and Mainz, he spent six years on Salzburg’s coaching staff and masterminded a run to the 2017/18 UEFA Europa League semi-finals during his debut campaign as head coach. Last season he led Salzburg into the round of 16.
**Legend**

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**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

**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**: Current season total UEFA Europa League appearances from the group stage onwards prior to the current matchday
- **UEFA**: Total appearances in the UEFA Europa League, group stage to final only
- **UEFA**: Total appearances in the UEFA club competition including qualifying

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