# UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2019/20 SEASON

**MATCH PRESS KITS**

Beşiktaş Park - Istanbul  
Thursday 28 November 2019  
18.55CET (20.55 local time)  
Group K - Matchday 5

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Beşiktaş have only pride to play for as they stage their final European home game of the season against a Slovan Bratislava side whose chances of further progress from Group K are hanging by a thread.

• The Istanbul side have lost all of their first four matches, conceding late goals to bring defeats on both Matchday 1 (2-4 at Slovan) and 2 (0-1 at home to Wolverhampton Wanderers) before back-to-back defeats by Braga (1-2 h, 1-3 a) ended their interest in the competition.

• Slovan began brightly, adding a 2-2 draw at Braga to the opening win against Beşiktaş, but lost vital ground with successive defeats by Wolves (1-2 h, 0-1 a) and must win in Istanbul and hope that the Braga-Wolves match is not drawn to maintain their hopes of playing springtime European football for the first time in over half a century.

Previous meetings
• The clubs had never met in UEFA competition until Matchday 1, when Slovan, spurred by two goals from their prolific Slovenian international striker Andraž Šporar, struck twice in added time to beat Beşiktaş 4-2 and end a run of nine straight UEFA Europa League group stage defeats.

• While Beşiktaş have now lost all three away fixtures against Slovakian clubs, they have won both previous home fixtures – against MFK Košice (2-0) and Spartak Trnava (3-0) in successful UEFA Cup Winners' Cup first-round ties during the 1990s.

• Slovan's experience of Turkish opposition before this season was limited to two matches – a 2-1 home win and a 1-4 away defeat in a 1996/97 UEFA Cup qualifying tie against Trabzonspor.

Form guide
Beşiktaş
• Third in the 2018/19 Turkish Süper Lig, Beşiktaş's reward was direct access to the UEFA Europa League group stage; they also participated last season, failing to reach the round of 32.

• This is the Istanbul club's sixth participation in the UEFA Europa League group stage, from which they qualified at the first three attempts but have now come up short on each of the last three occasions. Their best season in the competition came in 2016/17 when, after finishing third in their UEFA Champions League group, they went on to reach the quarter-finals, where they succumbed on penalties to Lyon.

• Beşiktaş's 34 matches in the UEFA Europa League group stage have yielded 15 wins, eight draws and 11 defeats. In Istanbul their record is W9 D3 L5, but they are currently on a four-game losing streak, the defeats by Wolves and Braga following back-to-back losses last term against Genk (2-4) and Malmö (0-1).

Slovan
• Slovan's ninth Slovakian league title since independence – and 21st national championship in all – was won at a canter in 2018/19, with a final victory margin of 17 points. Their European campaign, however, ended in the UEFA Europa League third qualifying round at the hands of Rapid Wien.

• This term the club from the Slovakian capital lost a penalty shoot-out against Montenegro's Sušica in the UEFA Champions League first qualifying round, but won both legs of their first two UEFA Europa League qualifying ties against Feronikeli and Dundalk before stunning Greek double winners PAOK on away goals (1-0 h, 2-3 a) to reach the group stage for the third time. Their previous two participations, in 2011/12 and 2014/15, yielded a sum total of one point, and they have not played a European fixture in the spring since their 1968/69 European Cup Winners' Cup triumph, when they beat Barcelona 3-2 in the Basel final.

• Slovan had lost all six of their away fixtures in the UEFA Europa League group stage, scoring just one goal and conceding 18, until that 2-2 draw at Braga on Matchday 2.

Links and trivia
• Slovan's Bulgarian skipper Vasil Bozhikov joined from Turkish club Kasımpaşa in 2017.

• Beşiktaş have played 50 matches in the UEFA Europa League proper, more than any other Turkish club. While they have won slightly more games than they have lost (21 to 20), their goals for and against totals are identical (73).

• Although a run of nine successive defeats in the UEFA Europa League, group stage to final, ended for Slovan on Matchday 1, it remains a competition record.

The coaches
• Appointed by Beşiktaş on a three-year contract in May 2019 to replace Şenol Güneş, who had left to take charge of the Turkish national side, Abdullah Avcı moved across the city having just led İstanbul Başakşehir to a runners-up spot in the Süper Lig. That ended the second of his two five-year spells with the club, which was preceded by an
unsuccessful two-year sojourn in charge of the Turkish national side. He had previously led the country to victory in the 2005 UEFA European Under-17 Championship in Italy.

• The assistant coach in Slovan's runaway 2018/19 Slovakian title triumph, his fourth season in the role, Kozák was promoted to the position of head coach in the summer as a replacement for Martin Ševela and duly succeeded in fulfilling his first assignment by steering the club through to the UEFA Europa League group stage. Capped 25 times by Slovakia, and a participant at the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the former midfielder won four Slovakian league titles – one each with Košice and Slovan and the other two with MFK Petržalka.
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
CONF: FIFA Confed 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
UEURO: UEFA European Women's Championship

Other abbreviations
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
3rdPO: Third-place play-off
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: 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: All-time total appearances in UEFA club competition including qualifying
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