CFR 1907 Cluj
Stadionul Dr. Constantin Rădulescu - Cluj-Napoca
Thursday 20 February 2020
18.55CET (19.55 local time)
Round of 32, First leg

Sevilla FC

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Match background

CFR Cluj's 15th European fixture of 2019/20 brings them up against a Sevilla side bidding to win the UEFA Europa League for a record fourth time.

• The Romanian champions, who played four UEFA Champions League qualifying ties last summer, are through to the UEFA Europa League round of 32 for the second time, having finished runners-up in Group E behind a Celtic side they defeated 2-0 at home on Matchday 6 to seal qualification. Sevilla coasted through Group A, winning their first five matches before signing off with a defeat at fellow qualifiers APOEL.

Previous meetings

• CFR's previous experience of Spanish opposition is limited to a 2005 UEFA Intertoto Cup second-round tie against Athletic Club that they won on penalties after two 1-0 home wins.

• Sevilla have won five of their six previous UEFA competition matches against Romanian clubs, the first four all against Steaua Bucureşti in 2007, but lost the most recent, going down 1-0 at Unirea Urziceni – then coached by current CFR boss Dan Petrescu – in the 2009/10 UEFA Champions League group stage.

Form guide

CFR

• CFR claimed their fifth Romanian league title – and second in succession – in 2018/19, all of those triumphs having come since 2008. In Europe, they lost to Malmö in the second qualifying round of the UEFA Champions League and to Dudelange in the UEFA Europa League play-offs.

• A 1-0 loss at Astana kicked off this season's UEFA Champions League campaign in early July, but CFR turned that tie around and also went on to eliminate both Maccabi Tel-Aviv and Celtic before Slavia Praha overcame them in the play-offs to send them into the UEFA Europa League group stage. They opened with a 2-1 home win against APOEL before Celtic avenged the Romanian side's earlier win in Glasgow, but two 1-0 victories against Rennes ultimately proved crucial in taking them through ahead of both the French club and Lazio.

• CFR's only previous group stage appearance in the UEFA Europa League, in 2009/10, ended with just one win and five defeats, but they crossed over to the round of 32 from the UEFA Champions League in 2012/13, losing both legs to Internazionale (0-2 a, 0-3 h).

• CFR have lost five of their last ten home fixtures in the UEFA Europa League, qualifying included (W4 D1), but won all three group games at their own stadium this term. They have never drawn a match in the UEFA Europa League proper, their overall record, home and away, now standing at W5 L9. The Matchday 1 win against Lazio ended a run of seven straight defeats.

Sevilla

• Sevilla played 16 UEFA Europa League matches last season, progressing from the second qualifying round to the round of 16, where they were dramatically eliminated by Slavia Praha after a 4-3 extra-time defeat in the Czech capital. The Andalusian club re-qualified for this competition by finishing sixth in the 2018/19 Liga, which secured an automatic group stage berth.

• The three-time UEFA Europa League winners have never failed to progress from their group, making it five qualifications out of five this term and doing so as group winners for the third time. They defeated both Qarabağ and Dudelange home and away and also won 1-0 at home to APOEL before ending the section with a defeat by the same scoreline in Cyprus. Nevertheless, their final tally of 15 points was the most achieved by any team in this season's group stage.

• Sevilla have won four of their five previous UEFA Europa League rounds of 32 ties, their only defeat having come in the first of them, back in 2010/11, when they were eliminated on away goals by Porto (1-2 h, 1-0 a). They knocked out Maribor in 2013/14 (2-2 a, 2-1 h), Borussia Mönchengladbach in 2014/15 (1-0 h, 3-2 a) and Molde in 2015/16 (3-0 h, 0-1 a) – all en route to lifting the trophy – and were victorious again at this stage last term, getting the better of Lazio (1-0 a, 2-0 h).

• The Matchday 6 defeat in Nicosia means that Sevilla have lost four of their last eight away fixtures in the UEFA Europa League. In the competition overall, including qualifying, their figures on the road are W19 D7 L10. They have won all seven previous UEFA Europa League knockout phase ties in which they played the first leg away.

UEFA Europa League squad changes

• CFR

In: Paulo Vinicius, Cristian Manea (Apollon Limassol, loan), Grzegorz Sandomierski (Jagiellonia)

Out: Mihai Butean, Juan Culio (Quilmes Atlético), Jesús Fernández (Panetolikos, loan), Răzvan Horj (Academica Clinceni), Rareş Ispas, Alexandru Paşcanu (Voluntari, loan), Ionuţ Peteleu
• Sevilla
  In: Youssef En-Nesyri (Leganés), Suso (Milan, loan)
  Out: Munas Dabbur (Hoffenheim), Bryan Gil (Leganés, loan), Javier Hernández (LA Galaxy), Alejandro Pozo (Mallorca, loan)

Links and trivia
• CFR’s Lithuanian goalkeeper Giedrius Arlauskis was in Petrescu’s Unirea Urziceni side that defeated Sevilla 1-0 at home in the UEFA Champions League ten seasons ago; Jesús Navas played for the Spanish club.
• Navas has already played in Romania this season, starring in Spain’s 2-1 win in September’s UEFA EURO 2020 qualifier in Bucharest; CFR’s Ciprian Deac started for Romania.
• Three CFR squad members have played for Spanish clubs – Arlauskis (Espanyol 2015–16), Michael Pereira (Mallorca 2010–16, Granada 2014) and Lacina Traoré (Sporting Gijón 2017).
• Arlauskis was an Espanyol player at the same time as Sevilla midfielder Joan Jordán.
• Sevilla were the only team to win their first five group fixtures in this season’s UEFA Europa League.
• Sevilla have scored 120 goals in the UEFA Europa League, group stage to final, and need four more to equal Villarreal’s competition record. They have also registered 38 wins, the same number as Villarreal but one fewer than top-ranked Salzburg.

The coaches
• The sixth most-capped Romanian international of all time, with 95 appearances, Dan Petrescu played in four successive major tournaments from 1994 to 2000. The attacking right-back also carved out a successful career at club level, notably with Steaua and in England at Chelsea, with whom he spent five years and won three major trophies. He has had a diverse coaching career, the highlight a surprise Romanian title triumph with Unirea Urziceni in 2008/09 – a feat he repeated with CFR Cluj in 2017/18 and again the following season after returning from China in March 2019.
• Sevilla appointed Julen Lopetegui as their head coach on a three-year contract in June 2019, the former goalkeeper returning to duty in the Spanish Liga after a brief spell in charge of Real Madrid had swiftly ended in October 2018. A highly successful stint with Spain’s youth selections brought European titles with the Under-19s in 2012 and U21s the following year. He had 18 months at Porto before taking charge of the senior Spain side and qualifying them for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, only to be dismissed on the eve of the tournament.

UEFA Europa League knockout debut for VAR system
Video Assistant Referees (VAR) will be deployed in the UEFA Europa League knockout phase. The decision was taken by the UEFA Executive Committee last September, following the introduction of the system in several UEFA competitions in the 2018/19 campaign.
Legend

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
UIC: UEFA Intertoto Cup
ICF: Inter-Cities Fairs Cup

National team competitions
EURO: UEFA European Football Championship
WC: FIFA World Cup
CONF: 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

Other abbreviations
F: Final
GS: Group stage
GS1: First group stage
3QR: Third qualifying round
R1: First 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
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)
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 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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