UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2019/20 SEASON
MATCH PRESS KITS

PFC Ludogorets 1945
Ludogorets Arena - Razgrad
Thursday 20 February 2020
18.55CET (19.55 local time)
Round of 32, First leg

FC Internazionale Milano

Last updated 19/02/2020 04:15CET

Match background
Legend

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Match background

Bulgarian champions Ludogorets are looking to win at home in the spring for the first time in European competition but face a formidable obstacle as Serie A high fliers Internazionale return to the UEFA Europa League round of 32 for the second successive season.

- All of Ludogorets' best work in the group stage was done at the start as they beat CSKA Moskva 5-1 at home and Ferencváros 3-0 away, a 1-1 draw against the Hungarian side on Matchday 6 eventually edging them through to the knockout phase from Group G behind Espanyol. Inter, meanwhile, were unable to negotiate a way through their UEFA Champions League section, finishing third behind Barcelona and Borussia Dortmund.

Previous meetings

- Ludogorets' two previous ties against Italian opposition also came in the UEFA Europa League round of 32. They defeated Lazio in 2013/14 (1-0 a, 3-3 h) but lost to Inter's city rivals AC Milan in 2017/18 (0-3 h, 0-1 a). They are therefore still seeking their first home win against Italian visitors.

- Inter are undefeated in five matches against Bulgarian sides and have drawn both previous away fixtures – though the last of those took place back in 1974 when they drew 0-0 at Etar in the first round of the UEFA Cup, winning the return 3-0.

Form guide

Ludogorets

- Ludogorets won an eighth consecutive Bulgarian league title in 2018/19 to earn a place in this season's UEFA Champions League first qualifying round, where they fell to Ferencváros. They subsequently came through UEFA Europa League qualifiers against Valur, The New Saints and Maribor to reach the group stage, where they had exited the competition last term.

- This season they made it through their group thanks predominantly to those two big wins on Matchdays 1 and 2. They picked up just two further points thereafter, however, and fell to their heaviest European defeat when they went down 6-0 at Espanyol on Matchday 4.

- The Razgrad club are in the round of 32 for the fourth time. They won their first tie at this stage, against Lazio six years ago, but lost the other two, against Copenhagen in 2016/17 (1-2 h, 0-0 a) and Milan the season afterwards.

- Ludogorets have kept clean sheets in eight of their 14 European home games over the past two seasons (W6 D5 L3), but the only win they have posted in the UEFA Europa League proper in their last nine home matches is that 5-1 success against CSKA Moskva (D4 L4). They have also never won at home in four knockout phase fixtures, drawing the first and losing the next three.

Internazionale

- Fourth in Serie A in 2018/19, Inter's European campaign ended with defeat by Eintracht Frankfurt in the UEFA Europa League round of 16 after they had finished third in their UEFA Champions League section behind Barcelona and Tottenham Hotspur – the first time the Nerazzurri had failed to progress from their group in nine UEFA Champions League campaigns.

- History repeated itself this season as Inter could only manage another third place in their UEFA Champions League group, a closing 1-2 home defeat to Barcelona scuppering their chances and leaving them with seven points – one fewer than in the previous campaign.

- Inter have a perfect record in the UEFA Europa League round of 32, having won all of their previous three ties – against CFR Cluj in 2012/13 (2-0 h, 3-0 a), Celtic in 2014/15 (3-3 a, 1-0 h) and Rapid Wien in 2018/19 (1-0 a, 4-0 h). In each of those seasons, however, the three-time UEFA Cup winners exited in the round of 16.

- That 1-0 win in Vienna last season is the Milanese giants' only victory in their last nine UEFA Europa League away fixtures (D4 L4); it also ended a run of four straight defeats.

UEFA Europa League squad changes

- Ludogorets

  In: Cauly (Paderborn), Vladislav Stoyanov, Taleb Tawatha

  Out: Jacek Góralski (Kairat), Jody Lukoki, Renan

- Inter

  In: Christian Eriksen (Tottenham), Victor Moses (Chelsea, loan), Ashley Young (Manchester United)

  Out: Kwadwo Asamoah, Federico Dimarco (Hellas Verona), Valentino Lazaro (Newcastle, loan), Matteo Politano (Napoli, loan)

Links and trivia

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Opposing coaches Pavel Vrba and Antonio Conte were both in charge of their respective countries, Czech Republic and Italy, at UEFA EURO 2016.

Inter's Antonio Candreva was in the Lazio side eliminated from the round of 32 by Ludogorets in 2013/14, while Marcelo Brozović's Dinamo Zagreb suffered home and away defeats by the Bulgarian club that same season in the group stage.

Ludogorets' Romanian defender Cosmin Moţi had a short spell on loan in Italy at Siena in 2008/09, making just four Serie A appearances.

Alexis Sánchez played for Arsenal in both UEFA Champions League group stage games against Ludogorets in 2016/17, opening the scoring in the 6-0 home win.

Ludogorets' final total of eight points was the lowest of all the 24 qualifying teams that came through this season's UEFA Europa League group stage.

Vrba's first match in charge of Ludogorets was a 6-0 home win against Botev Vratsa last Saturday – the Razgrad club's biggest league win of the season.

The coaches

Vrba was appointed as the new Ludogorets head coach on 18 December, joining the club from Viktoria Plzeň. After stints as Czech Republic and Anji coach, leading the former at UEFA EURO 2016 in France, he rejoined Plzeň in June 2017 having previously steered the club to two domestic championship titles in 2011 and 2013 during his first (five-year) spell. He made it three championships in 2018 and also led the club into the UEFA Champions League group stage for the third time. Once a Baník Ostrava player and coach, he won the 2006/07 Slovak title as Žilina boss.

A combative and versatile midfielder, Conte is most commonly associated with Juventus, where he spent 13 seasons as a player, winning a treasure trove of trophies including the 1995/96 UEFA Champions League. He also coached the club to three successive Serie A titles between 2012 and 2014, going on to take charge of Italy for two years, including the UEFA EURO 2016 finals, and then leaving for Chelsea, where he won the Premier League and FA Cup before being replaced by compatriot Maurizio Sarri. After a year's sabbatical, Conte was appointed as Inter boss in May 2019.

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

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

**National team competitions**

- **EURO**: UEFA European Football Championship
- **WC**: FIFA World Cup
- **CONF CUP**: FIFA Confederations Cup
- **FRIE**: Friendly internationals
- **U21 FRIE**: Under-21 friendly internations
- **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)
- (**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)
- (**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)
- (**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)

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**Statistics**

- **D**: 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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