

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2020/21 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



PFC Ludogorets 1945

Ludogorets Arena - Razgrad

Thursday 22 October 2020

21.00CET (22.00 local time)

Group J - Matchday 1



Royal Antwerp FC

Last updated 29/10/2020 22:18CET



Match background

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Legend

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Match background

A fourth successive UEFA Europa League group stage campaign for Bulgarian champions Ludogorets begins with a home fixture against Royal Antwerp, who are appearing for the first time at this juncture of the competition.

Previous meetings

- Ludogorets have never previously faced a Belgian club, while Antwerp's sole experience of Bulgarian opposition dates back 31 years to a legendary UEFA Cup first-round tie against Levski Sofia (then called Vitosha), in which they drew the away leg 0-0 before sensationally scoring three late goals to overturn a 1-3 deficit and win the return fixture 4-3.

Form guide

Ludogorets

- Ludogorets won a ninth consecutive Bulgarian league title in 2019/20 to earn a place in this season's UEFA Champions League first qualifying round, where they beat Budućnost of Montenegro (3-1 a) before falling in the next round to Danish champions Midtjylland (0-1 h). Awarded a bye into the UEFA Europa League play-offs, they then beat Dinamo Brest 2-0 away to reach the group stage for the fourth year in a row and fifth time in all.
- Last season was Ludogorets' longest in this competition, incorporating 16 matches as they progressed from the second qualifying round to the round of 32, where they were knocked out by Internazionale (0-2 h, 1-2 a). It was the third time out of four that they had qualified from their group, finishing runners-up to Espanyol and ahead of Ferencváros, their conquerors in the UEFA Champions League first qualifying round, and CSKA Moskva.
- Ludogorets have failed to win any of their last four European home games, losing three of them without scoring. In the UEFA Europa League proper they have posted just one win in their last ten home matches (D4 L5) – a 5-1 success against CSKA Moskva on Matchday 1 last season.

Antwerp

- Antwerp beat champions Club Brugge 1-0 in the 2019/20 Belgian Cup final – the club's first victory in the competition for 28 years – to secure a place in the UEFA Europa League group stage for the first time.
- Last season the club returned to European competition for the first time in a quarter of a century but were unable to negotiate their way through UEFA Europa League qualifying, going out in the play-offs to AZ Alkmaar after extra time (1-1 a, 1-4 h) following an away goals extra-time win in the third qualifying round against a Viktoria Plzeň side led by current Ludogorets coach Pavel Vrba (1-0 h, 1-2 a).
- European Cup Winners' Cup runners-up to Parma in the 1992/93 final at Wembley, the Great Old have failed to win away from home in Europe since the second round of that competition (4-2 at Admira Wacker in the first leg), drawing three games and losing four.

Links and trivia

- Antwerp's Pieter Gerkens played at Anderlecht alongside Ludogorets defender Josué Sá in 2017/18.
- Bernard Tekpetey (Ludogorets) and Nana Ampomah (Antwerp) were team-mates last season at Fortuna Düsseldorf.
- Vrba has a 100% success rate in taking his team through the UEFA Europa League group stage, achieving it twice with Plzeň in 2012/13 and 2017/18.
- Appointed in May 2020, Antwerp coach Ivan Leko's first game in charge was the Belgian Cup final win on 1 August against Club Brugge, the team he had led to the Belgian title in 2017/18. As a Hajduk Split player Leko faced Bulgarian side Levski Sofia in the first round of the 1999/2000 UEFA Cup, losing the tie 3-0 (0-0 h, 0-3 a).
- Antwerp are one of five clubs making their UEFA Europa League group stage debut in 2020/21, the others being Granada and Omonia (Group E), Leicester City (G) and Sivasspor (I). They are the eighth different Belgian club to appear in the competition proper.

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
CONFCUP: 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	GS: Group stage	(aet): After extra time	pens: Penalties
GS1: First group stage	GS2: Second group stage	No.: Number	og: Own goal
3QR: Third qualifying round	R1: First round	ag: Match decided on away goals	P: Penalty
R2: Second round	R3: Third round	PI: Matches played	agg: Aggregate
R4: Fourth round	PR: Preliminary round	Pos.: Position	AP: Appearances
SF: Semi-finals	QF: Quarter-finals	Pts: Points	Comp.: Competition
R16: round of 16	QR: Qualifying round	R: Sent off (straight red card)	D: Drawn
R32: Round of 32	1QR: First qualifying round	Res.: Result	DoB: Date of birth
1st: first leg	2QR: Second qualifying round	sg: Match decided by silver goal	ET: Extra Time
2nd: second leg	FT: Final tournament	GF: Goals for	GA: Goals against
PO: Play-off	ELITE: Elite round	gg: Match decided by golden goal	t: Match decided by toss of a coin
Rep: Replay	3rdPO: Third-place play-off	Y/R: Sent off (two yellow cards)	W: Won
PO - FT: Play-off for Final Tournament	GS-FT: Group stage – final tournament	f: Match forfeited	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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