# UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE - 2020/21 SEASON
## MATCH PRESS KITS

**Olympiacos FC**

**Stadio Georgios Karaiskakis - Piraeus**
Thursday 11 March 2021
21.00CET (22.00 local time)
Round of 16, First leg

**Arsenal FC**

Last updated 09/03/2021 18:11CET

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# Match background

Conquerors of Benfica in neutral Piraeus in the round of 32, Arsenal make a quick return to the Stadio Georgios Karaiskakis to take on Olympiacos, the team that knocked them out of last season's UEFA Europa League.

• Despite losing their last five fixtures in UEFA Champions League Group C, Olympiacos managed to take third place above Marseille to secure an eighth appearance in the UEFA Europa League knockout phase. Further progress was made as they beat PSV Eindhoven 5-4 on aggregate, a 4-2 home win followed by a 2-1 defeat in Eindhoven that proved undamaging thanks to Egyptian international Ahmed Hassan's decisive 88th-minute strike.

• Arsenal claimed maximum points in the autumn from UEFA Europa League Group B, doing the double over Rapid Wien, Dundalk and fellow qualifiers Molde while scoring 20 goals – the most ever by an English team in a UEFA Europa League group – before edging out Benfica in the round of 32, a 1-1 draw in Rome followed by a 3-2 comeback win in Piraeus in which captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored twice, including an 87th-minute winner.

**Previous meetings**

• The clubs were involved in a dramatic round of 32 tie last season, Olympiacos losing the first home leg 0-1 to a goal from Alexandre Lacazette but winning the return in London 2-1 after extra time thanks to a 120th-minute Youssef El-Arabi strike.

• Prior to that tie the clubs had been paired together four times in the UEFA Champions League group stage, and on every occasion Arsenal had staged the home fixture on Matchday 2 and Olympiacos the return game on Matchday 6.

• The first six matches between them – in 2009/10, 2011/12 and 2012/13 – all ended in home wins, but in 2015/16 the roles were reversed, Olympiacos winning 3-2 away only to succumb to a 0-3 defeat at home, Olivier Giroud's hat-trick enabling Arsenal to pip their hosts to the runners-up spot in the group on the head-to-head rule and therefore secure a 16th successive appearance in the UEFA Champions League knockout phase.

• Olympiacos have faced four different English clubs on home turf in the past two seasons and failed to beat any of them, drawing against Tottenham Hotspur (2-2) and Wolverhampton Wanderers (1-1) and losing to Arsenal and, in this season's UEFA Champions League group stage, Manchester City. Their all-time record at home to English visitors is now W7 D5 L6.

• Including the round of 32 victory against Benfica, Arsenal have won five of their 11 previous UEFA competition encounters in Greece, losing five, their last three visits to the Stadio Georgios Karaskaikis having all been victorious.

**Form guide**
**Olympiacos**

• Champions of Greece for the 45th time in 2019/20 – their first title since 2017 – Olympiacos also lifted the Greek Cup for the 28th time to complete their 18th domestic double. Additionally they played 16 European matches, starting their campaign in the UEFA Champions League second qualifying round and ending it in the UEFA Europa League round of 16, where they were eliminated by Wolves after losing the second leg at Molineux 1-0.

• This season Pedro Martins' side kicked off their UEFA Champions League adventure in the play-offs, where they overcame Omonoia (2-0 h, 0-0 a), but despite opening their Group C campaign with a last-gasp 1-0 win in Piraeus against Marseille, two defeats without scoring against Porto (0-2 a, 0-2 h) and Manchester City (0-3 a, 0-1 h) limited their ambition to taking third place, which they managed on the away goals rule in their head-to-head comparison with Marseille after losing 2-1 at the Stade Vélodrome on Matchday 5.

• Through to the UEFA Europa League knockout phase following a mid-season transfer from the UEFA Champions League for the sixth time, Olympiacos are competing in the round of 16 for the fourth time but have never crossed this threshold, losing all three previous ties – against Metalist Kharkiv in 2011/12 (1-0 a, 1-2 h), Beşiktaş in 2016/17 (1-1 h, 1-4 a) and Wolves last term.

• The Greek club have won only two of their 11 home fixtures in the knockout phase of the UEFA Europa League – the first, 1-0 against Rubin in the 2011/12 round of 32, and the last, against PSV. Their record otherwise is D5 L4.

**Arsenal**

• Eighth in the 2019/20 Premier League, Arsenal ensured a 25th consecutive season in Europe by winning the FA Cup under new manager Mikel Arteta – the club's record 14th triumph in the competition – with a 2-1 victory over London rivals Chelsea in the final. Their third successive UEFA Europa League campaign was ended in the round of 32 by Olympiacos.

• UEFA Champions League ever-presents for 19 seasons in a row from 1998/99 to 2016/17, Arsenal reached the UEFA Europa League semi-finals at the first attempt in 2017/18, losing to eventual winners Atlético de Madrid, before going one step further and making it to the 2018/19 final, where they were defeated 4-1 by Chelsea in Baku. They

have been group winners on all four UEFA Europa League appearances – an unprecedented feat – and this season became the 11th team in the competition to top their section with maximum points thanks to wins against Rapid (2-1 a, 4-1 h), Dundalk (3-0 h, 4-2 a) and Molde (4-1 h, 3-0 a).

• Arsenal have won both of their two previous UEFA Europa League round of 16 ties, beating AC Milan in 2017/18 (2-0 a, 3-1 h) and Rennes in 2018/19 (1-3 a, 3-0 h). Those wins followed seven successive eliminations in the UEFA Champions League round of 16.

• The Gunners are undefeated in ten European away games (W7 D3) since Rennes beat them in the 2018/19 UEFA Europa League round of 16 first leg. Their overall away record in the UEFA Europa League knockout phase is W5 D2 L3.

**Links and trivia**

• Hassan's next appearance in UEFA club competition will be his 50th.

• Aubameyang's winner against Benfica last time out was Arsenal's 100th goal in the UEFA Europa League, group stage to final, making them the tenth club to reach that landmark – although arch rivals Tottenham beat them to it as the first from England thanks to their 4-0 home win against Wolfsberg the previous day that lifted their tally to 101 goals, albeit in 56 matches compared to Arsenal's 45.

• Sokratis Papastathopoulos joined Olympiacos in January after being released from his Arsenal contract. Having joined the Gunners in 2018 he made 69 appearances in all competitions, including the 2019 UEFA Europa League final, and scored six goals.

• Papastathopoulos and Aubameyang were also team-mates at Borussia Dortmund from 2013 to 2018.

• Bruma (Olympiacos) and Emile Smith Rowe (Arsenal) spent the second half of 2018/19 together at RB Leipzig.

• José Holebas had five seasons in the English Premier League with Watford before returning for a second spell with Olympiacos at the end of last season.

• Olympiacos midfielder Yann M'Vila spent 2015/16 on loan at Premier League side Sunderland, while Andreas Bouchalakis is a former Nottingham Forest player, having spent 2017/18 with the club in the English Championship.

• Olympiacos midfielder Mathieu Valbuena and Arsenal striker Lacazette are former Lyon (2015–17) and France (2013–15) team-mates.

• José Sá and Rúben Semedo (Olympiacos) are Portugal team-mates of Arsenal's Cédric, while Hassan and Mohamed Elneny are fellow Egyptian internationals.

• Olympiacos are one of five clubs appearing in the UEFA Europa League round of 16 for the second successive season, along with Manchester United, Rangers, Roma and Shakhtar Donetsk.

• Olympiacos hold a 16-point lead at the top of the Greek Super League, having won 20 and drawn four of their 25 matches, while Arsenal are tenth in the Premier League having lost as many games (11) as they have won.

# 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
**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

## 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**: 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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