

EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS - 2016/18 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



Italy

Renzo Barbera - Palermo

Friday 24 March 2017
20.45CET (20.45 local time)
Group G - Matchday 5



Albania

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EUROPEAN QUALIFIERS OFFICIAL SPONSORS



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Previous meetings

Head to Head

	Qualifying								Final tournament				Total					
	Home				Away													
	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA
Total																		
Italy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	0	0	1	0
Albania	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	1	0	1

Squad list

Italy

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	Current season					
						Qual.		FT			
						Pld	Gls	Pld	Gls		
Goalkeepers											
-	Gianluigi Buffon	28/01/1978	39	Juventus	-	4	0	0	0		
-	Alex Meret	22/03/1997	20	Udinese	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Gianluigi Donnarumma	25/02/1999	18	Milan	-	0	0	0	0		
Defenders											
-	Andrea Barzagli	08/05/1981	35	Juventus	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Matteo Darmian	02/12/1989	27	Man. United	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Daniilo D'Ambrosio	09/09/1988	28	Internazionale	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Leonardo Bonucci	01/05/1987	29	Juventus	*	4	0	0	0		
-	Mattia De Sciglio	20/10/1992	24	Milan	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Daniele Rugani	29/07/1994	22	Juventus	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Alessio Romagnoli	12/01/1995	22	Milan	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Davide Zappacosta	11/06/1992	24	Torino	-	1	0	0	0		
Midfielders											
-	Daniele De Rossi	24/07/1983	33	Roma	-	2	1	0	0		
-	Antonio Candrea	28/02/1987	30	Internazionale	-	3	2	0	0		
-	Marco Verratti	05/11/1992	24	Paris	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Marco Parolo	25/01/1985	32	Lazio	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Roberto Gagliardini	07/04/1994	22	Internazionale	-	0	0	0	0		
Forwards											
-	Éder	15/11/1986	30	Internazionale	-	4	0	0	0		
-	Ciro Immobile	20/02/1990	27	Lazio	-	4	4	0	0		
-	Simone Verdi	12/07/1992	24	Bologna	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Nicola Sansone	10/09/1991	25	Villarreal	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Lorenzo Insigne	04/06/1991	25	Napoli	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Andrea Belotti	20/12/1993	23	Torino	-	3	3	0	0		
-	Andrea Petagna	30/06/1995	21	Atalanta	-	0	0	0	0		
Coach											
-	Gian Piero Ventura	14/01/1948	69		-	4	0	0	0		

Albania

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	Current season					
						Qual.		FT			
						Pld	Gls	Pld	Gls		
Goalkeepers											
-	Orges Shehi	25/09/1977	39	Skënderbeu	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Alban Hoxha	23/11/1987	29	Partizani	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Thoma Strakosha	19/03/1995	22	Lazio	-	0	0	0	0		
Defenders											
-	Ansi Agolli	11/10/1982	34	Qarabağ	*	3	0	0	0		
-	Andi Lila	12/02/1986	31	Giannina	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Frédéric Veseli	20/11/1992	24	Empoli	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Arlind Ajeti	25/09/1993	23	Torino	-	0	0	0	0		
-	Elseid Hysaj	20/02/1994	23	Napoli	-	4	0	0	0		
-	Azdren Llullaku	15/02/1988	29	Astana	*	2	0	0	0		
-	Naser Aliji	27/12/1993	23	Kaiserslautern	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Albi Alla	01/02/1993	24	Kukës	-	0	0	0	0		
Midfielders											
-	Jahmir Hyka	08/03/1988	29	San Jose Earthquakes	*	3	0	0	0		
-	Migjen Basha	05/01/1987	30	Bari	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Odise Roshi	22/05/1991	25	Terek	-	4	0	0	0		
-	Taulant Xhaka	28/03/1991	25	Basel	*	3	0	0	0		
-	Amir Abrashi	27/03/1990	26	Freiburg	-	2	0	0	0		
-	Burim Kukeli	16/01/1984	33	Zürich	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Ledian Memushaj	17/12/1986	30	Pescara	-	3	0	0	0		
-	Liridon Latifi	06/02/1994	23	Skënderbeu	-	0	0	0	0		
Forwards											
-	Bekim Balaj	11/01/1991	26	Terek	-	4	2	0	0		
-	Sokol Çikalleshi	27/07/1990	26	Akhisar	-	1	0	0	0		
-	Armando Sadiku	27/05/1991	25	Lugano	-	1	1	0	0		
-	Eros Grezda	15/04/1995	21	Lokomotiva Zagreb	-	0	0	0	0		
Coach											
-	Giovanni de Biasi	16/06/1956	60		-	4	0	0	0		

Head coach

Gian Piero Ventura

Date of birth: 14 January 1948

Nationality: Italian

Playing career: FS Sestrese Calcio, USD Enna, SSDU Sanremo, USD Novese

Coaching career: UC Sampdoria (youth), ASD Albenga, ACD Rapallo Ruentes, Virtus Entella, Spezia Calcio, US Centese, US Pistoiese, ASD Giarre Calcio, Venezia FC, US Lecce, Cagliari Calcio (twice), UC Sampdoria, Udinese calcio, SSC Napoli, ACR Messina, Hellas-Verona FC, AC Pisa, FC Bari, Torino FC, Italy

- Born in Genoa, Ventura started his playing and coaching careers in the youth system of Sampdoria. As a midfielder he made nine appearances for Sicilian outfit Enna in Serie C, the highest level he played at.
- Began coaching in the Sampdoria academy in 1976 and worked for several teams in the lower divisions before finally making his Serie A debut more than two decades later after leading Cagliari to promotion in 1998. He had done the same the previous season with Lecce, only to be replaced by Cesare Prandelli before the campaign started.
- He continued to move between posts in Serie A and Serie B, but his stock rose considerably after he replaced Antonio Conte at Bari ahead of the 2009/10 season. Ventura guided Bari to tenth place with a club record 50 points in Serie A, drawing twice against José Mourinho's FC Internazionale Milano and defeating Juventus 3-1.
- In 2011 he accepted the call from Torino, then in Serie B. "I could take a mid-table team in Serie A but trying to take Torino back to Serie A is the real libido," he famously said. He not only achieved that but also led the Granata into Europe. Under Ventura, Torino reached the UEFA Europa League round of 16 in 2014/15 after a memorable 3-2 win at Athletic Club.
- After becoming the trainer with most consecutive games on the Torino bench (217), third overall behind Luigi Radice and Emiliano Mondonico, Ventura was announced as Conte's successor as Italy coach in June 2016.

Gianni De Biasi

Date of birth: 16 June 1956

Nationality: Italian

Playing career: Treviso FC, FC Internazionale Milano, AC Reggiana 1919, Pescara Calcio, Brescia Calcio, US Città di Palermo, Vicenza Calcio, Bassano Virtus 55 ST

Coaching career: FC Pro Vasto, Carpi FC 1909, Cosenza Calcio, SPAL 1907, Modena FC, Brescia Calcio, Torino FC (three times), Levante UD, Udinese Calcio, Albania

- Served apprenticeship as an academy coach and on the lower rungs of the Italian football ladder before making his name overseeing back-to-back promotions at Modena – guiding them from the third division to Serie A in 2002. It ended a 38-year absence from the top flight.
- Helped Modena survive first season among the elite before moving to Brescia, where he stayed two years before embarking on a tumultuous spell at Torino in 2005.
- Arrived with Torino picking up the pieces after bankruptcy and exceeded expectations by steering them back to Serie A in his first campaign, only to be replaced by Alberto Zaccheroni three days before the start of the next term. He was reappointed within seven months, leading the Granata to safety.
- Spent 2007/08 at Levante, winning plaudits despite relegation, then returned for a third stint at Torino with five games of the season remaining and saved them from relegation again. Sacked that December, he had a two-month reign at Udinese in 2009/10 before finding more constancy as Albania boss.
- A one-time midfielder with a handful of top-flight playing campaigns under his belt, De Biasi was installed in December 2011 as successor to Josip Kuže. He signed a new deal running until the end of UEFA EURO 2016 qualifying in November 2013, and promptly led the team to the finals for the first time, Albania only narrowly missing out on the last 16 in France after a memorable win against Romania in their final game.

Match officials

Referee	Slavko Vinčić (SVN)
Assistant referees	Tomaž Klančnik (SVN) , Andraž Kovacic (SVN)
Fourth official	Matej Jug (SVN)
FIFA Match Commissioner	Balázs Makray (HUN)
Referee observer	Oguz Sarvan (TUR)

Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Slavko Vinčić	25/11/1979	2	39

Slavko Vinčić

Referee since: 2000

First division: 2006

FIFA badge: 2010

Tournaments: 2013 UEFA European Under-17 Championship

Finals

N/A

FIFA World Cup matches involving teams from the two countries involved in this match

No such matches refereed

Other matches involving teams from either of the two countries involved in this match

Date	Competition	Stage reached	Home	Away	Result	Venue
08/05/2013	U17	GS-FT	Ukraine	Italy	1-2	Nitra
06/11/2014	UEL	GS	AS Saint-Étienne	FC Internazionale Milano	1-1	Saint-Etienne
15/09/2016	UEL	GS	PAOK FC	ACF Fiorentina	0-0	Salonika

Competition facts

The Week of Football concept enables fans around the world to enjoy the very best action from the European Qualifiers – which will determine UEFA's representatives at the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia.

Qualifying for the 2018 FIFA World Cup comprises nine groups of six teams, with matches played on a home-and-away basis.

Qualifying takes place under the 'Week of Football' concept, introduced ahead of the UEFA EURO 2016 qualifying campaign, in which games are spread out from Thursday to Tuesday, shining the spotlight on more teams on the road to the finals in Russia. Moreover, thanks to the Week of Football, at least 43% of matches will be played on weekends, giving fans a better chance to follow the action on television, in the stadiums and on UEFA.com.

Kick-off times will be set mainly at 18:00CET and 20:45CET on Saturdays and Sundays and at 20:45CET for Thursdays, Fridays, Mondays and Tuesdays. In double-header matchweeks, sides will play on Thursday/Sunday, Friday/Monday or Saturday/Tuesday. Each day of the Week of Football will feature eight to ten games.

The nine group winners will qualify directly for the final tournament. The eight best runners-up will contest play-offs to decide the last four qualifiers for the finals.

The 13 qualifiers then join hosts Russia in the finals to make it 14 UEFA member associations represented.

How qualification works

The other confederations have the following qualifying berths:

Africa: 5

Asia: 4.5

North and Central America and Caribbean: 3.5

Oceania: 0.5

South America: 4.5

Match-by-match lineups

Italy

FIFA World Cup - Qualifying round

Group G

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Spain	4	3	1	0	15	1	10
Italy	4	3	1	0	11	4	10
Israel	4	3	0	1	8	5	9
Albania	4	2	0	2	4	6	6
FYR Macedonia	4	0	0	4	4	11	0
Liechtenstein	4	0	0	4	1	16	0

Matchday 1 (05/09/2016)

Israel 1-3 Italy

Goals: 0-1 Pellè 14, 0-2 Candreva 31 (P) , 1-2 Ben Chaim 35, 1-3 Immobile 83

Italy: Buffon, Chiellini, Candreva (67 Florenzi), Bonaventura (63 Ogbonna), Pellè, Verratti, L. Antonelli, Barzagli, Parolo, Éder (70 Immobile), Bonucci

Matchday 2 (06/10/2016)

Italy 1-1 Spain

Goals: 0-1 Vitolo 55, 1-1 De Rossi 82 (P)

Italy: Buffon, De Sciglio, Romagnoli, Florenzi, Pellè (59 Immobile), Barzagli, De Rossi, Éder, Montolivo (30 Bonaventura), Bonucci, Parolo (76 Belotti)

Matchday 3 (09/10/2016)

FYR Macedonia 2-3 Italy

Goals: 0-1 Belotti 24, 1-1 Nestorovski 57, 2-1 Hasani 59, 2-2 Immobile 75, 2-3 Immobile 90+2

Italy: Buffon, De Sciglio, Romagnoli, Candreva, Bonaventura (64 Parolo), Verratti, Immobile, Barzagli, Bonucci, Bernardeschi (64 Sansone), Belotti (84 Éder)

Matchday 4 (12/11/2016)

Liechtenstein 0-4 Italy

Goals: 0-1 Belotti 11, 0-2 Immobile 12, 0-3 Candreva 32, 0-4 Belotti 44

Italy: Buffon, De Sciglio, Romagnoli, Candreva (74 Éder), Bonaventura (67 Insigne), Belotti, Verratti, Immobile (81 Zaza), De Rossi, Bonucci, Zappacosta

Matchday 5 (24/03/2017)

Italy-Albania

Matchday 6 (11/06/2017)

Italy-Liechtenstein

Matchday 7 (02/09/2017)

Spain-Italy

Matchday 8 (05/09/2017)

Italy-Israel

Matchday 9 (06/10/2017)

Italy-FYR Macedonia

Matchday 10 (09/10/2017)

Albania-Italy

Albania

FIFA World Cup - Qualifying round

Matchday 1 (06/09/2016)

Albania 2-1 FYR Macedonia

Goals: 1-0 Sadiku 9, 1-1 Alioski 51, 2-1 Balaj 89

Albania: Berisha, Hysaj, Xhimshiti, Agolli, Sadiku, Gashi (60 Memushaj), Kukeli, Xhaka, Mavraj, Hyka (67 Roshi), Abrashi (60 Balaj)

Matchday 2 (06/10/2016)

Liechtenstein 0-2 Albania

Goals: 0-1 Jehle 12 (og) , 0-2 Balaj 71

Albania: Berisha, Hysaj, Xhimshiti, Llullaku (69 Çikalleshi), Kukeli (44 Basha), Mavraj, Aliji, Hyka, Balaj, Roshi, Abrashi (46 Lila)

Matchday 3 (09/10/2016)

Albania 0-2 Spain

Goals: 0-1 Diego Costa 55, 0-2 Nolito 63

Albania: Berisha, Lila, Lenjani (46 Aliji), Hysaj, Xhimshiti, Agolli, Memushaj (68 Basha), Xhaka (75 Hyka), Mavraj, Balaj, Roshi

Matchday 4 (12/11/2016)

Albania 0-3 Israel

Goals: 0-1 Zahavi 18 (P) , 0-2 Einbinder 66, 0-3 Atar 83

Albania: Berisha, Hysaj (79 Çani), Xhimshiti, Agolli, Memushaj , Llullaku (57 Hoxha), Kukeli, Xhaka (82 Manaj), Mavraj, Balaj, Roshi

Matchday 5 (24/03/2017)

Italy-Albania

Matchday 6 (11/06/2017)

Israel-Albania

Matchday 7 (02/09/2017)

Albania-Liechtenstein

Matchday 8 (05/09/2017)

FYR Macedonia-Albania

Matchday 9 (06/10/2017)

Spain-Albania

Matchday 10 (09/10/2017)

Albania-Italy

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

Other abbreviations

(aet): After extra time
No.: Number
ag: Match decided on away goals
agg: Aggregate
AP: Appearances
Comp.: Competition
D: Drawn
DoB: Date of birth
ET: Extra Time
GA: Goals against
GF: Goals for
gg: Match decided by golden goal
L: Lost
Nat.: Nationality

pens: Penalties
og: Own goal
P: Penalty
Pld: Matches played
Pos.: Position
Pts: Points
R: Sent off (straight red card)
Res.: Result
sg: Match decided by silver goal
t: Match decided by toss of a coin
W: Won
Y: Booked
Y/R: Sent off (two yellow cards)
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

Overall: Total appearances in the UEFA European Under-21 Championship final tournament only

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