

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE - 2018/19 SEASON MATCH PRESS KITS



Switzerland

Kybunpark St. Gallen - St Gallen

Saturday 8 September 2018
18.00CET (18.00 local time)

Group A2 - Matchday 1



Iceland

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Previous meetings

Head to Head

FIFA World Cup

Date	Stage reached	Match	Result	Venue	Goalscorers
06/09/2013	QR (GS)	Switzerland - Iceland	4-4	Berne	Lichtsteiner 15, 30, Schär 27, Džemali 54 (P); Gudmundsson 3, 68, 90+1, Sigthórsson 56
16/10/2012	QR (GS)	Iceland - Switzerland	0-2	Reykjavik	Barnetta 66, Gavranović 79

EURO '96

Date	Stage reached	Match	Result	Venue	Goalscorers
16/08/1995	PR (GS)	Iceland - Switzerland	0-2	Reykjavik	Ohrel 4, Türkyilmaz 18
16/11/1994	PR (GS)	Switzerland - Iceland	1-0	Lausanne	Bickel 45

1980 UEFA European Championship

Date	Stage reached	Match	Result	Venue	Goalscorers
09/06/1979	PR (GS)	Iceland - Switzerland	1-2	Reykjavik	Gudlaugsson 49; Ponte 59, Hermann 61
22/05/1979	PR (GS)	Switzerland - Iceland	2-0	Berne	Hermann 27, Zappa 53

	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																		
Switzerland	3	2	1	0	3	3	0	0	-	-	-	-	6	5	1	0	13	5
Iceland	3	0	0	3	3	0	1	2	-	-	-	-	6	0	1	5	5	13

Squad list

Switzerland

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase		Pld	Gls
Goalkeepers									
1	Yann Sommer	17/12/1988	29	Mönchengladbach	-			0	0
12	Yvon Mvogo	06/06/1994	24	Leipzig	-			0	0
21	Gregor Kobel	06/12/1997	20	Hoffenheim	-			0	0
Defenders									
2	Kevin Mbabu	19/04/1995	23	Young Boys	-			0	0
3	François Moubandje	21/06/1990	28	Toulouse	-			0	0
4	Timm Klose	09/05/1988	30	Norwich	-			0	0
5	Manuel Akanji	19/07/1995	23	Dortmund	-			0	0
13	Ricardo Rodríguez	25/08/1992	26	Milan	-			0	0
20	Johan Djourou	18/01/1987	31	SPAL	-			0	0
22	Fabian Schär	20/12/1991	26	Newcastle	-			0	0
Midfielders									
6	Silvan Widmer	05/03/1993	25	Basel	-			0	0
8	Remo Freuler	15/04/1992	26	Atalanta	-			0	0
10	Granit Xhaka	27/09/1992	25	Arsenal	-			0	0
11	Edimilson Fernandes	15/04/1996	22	Fiorentina	-			0	0
14	Steven Zuber	17/08/1991	27	Hoffenheim	-			0	0
15	Djibril Sow	06/02/1997	21	Young Boys	-			0	0
17	Denis Zakaria	20/11/1996	21	Mönchengladbach	-			0	0
23	Xherdan Shaqiri	10/10/1991	26	Liverpool	-			0	0
Forwards									
7	Breel Embolo	14/02/1997	21	Schalke	-			0	0
9	Haris Seferović	22/02/1992	26	Benfica	-			0	0
16	Albian Ajeti	26/02/1997	21	Basel	-			0	0
18	Admir Mehmedi	16/03/1991	27	Wolfsburg	-			0	0
19	Mario Gavranović	24/11/1989	28	Dinamo Zagreb	-			0	0
Coach									
-	Vladimir Petković	15/08/1963	55		-			0	0

Iceland

No.	Player	DoB	Age	Club	D	League phase		Pld	Gls
Goalkeepers									
1	Hannes Halldórsson	27/04/1984	34	Qarabağ	-			0	0
12	Frederik Schram	19/01/1995	23	Vestsjælland	-			0	0
13	Rúnar Rúnarsson	18/02/1995	23	Dijon	-			0	0
Defenders									
2	Birkir Sævarsson	11/11/1984	33	Valur	-			0	0
3	Jón Gudni Fjóluson	10/04/1989	29	Krasnodar	-			0	0
4	Gudlaugur Pálsson	30/04/1991	27	Zürich	-			0	0
5	Sverrir Ingason	05/08/1993	25	Rostov	-			0	0
6	Ragnar Sigurdsson	19/06/1986	32	Rostov	-			0	0
7	Elmar Bjarnason	04/03/1987	31	AGF	-			0	0
14	Kári Árnason	13/10/1982	35	Gençlerbirliği	-			0	0
15	Hólmar Eyjólfsson	06/08/1990	28	Levski	-			0	0
18	Hörður Magnússon	11/02/1993	25	CSKA Moskva	-			0	0
23	Ari Skúlason	14/05/1987	31	Lokeren	-			0	0
Midfielders									
8	Birkir Bjarnason	27/05/1988	30	Aston Villa	-			0	0
10	Gylfi Sigurdsson	08/09/1989	28	Everton	-			0	0
16	Rúnar Már Sigurjónsson	18/06/1990	28	Grasshoppers	-			0	0
19	Rúrik Gíslason	25/02/1988	30	Sandhausen	-			0	0
20	Gudmundur Thórarinsson	15/04/1992	26	Norrköping	-			0	0
21	Arnór Ingvi Traustason	30/04/1993	25	Malmö	-			0	0
Forwards									
9	Kolbeinn Sigthórsson	14/03/1990	28	Nantes	-			0	0
11	Vidar Kjartansson	11/03/1990	28	Rostov	-			0	0
17	Björn Sigurdarsson	26/02/1991	27	Rostov	-			0	0
22	Jón Dadi Bödvarsson	25/05/1992	26	Reading	-			0	0
Coach									
-	Erik Hamrén	27/06/1957	61		-			0	0

Head coach

Vladimir Petković

Date of birth: 15 August 1963

Nationality: Swiss

Playing career: Sarajevo (twice), Rudar Ljubija, Koper, Chur 97 (twice), Sion, Martigny-Sports, Bellinzona (twice), Locarno

Coaching career: Bellinzona (twice), Malcantone Agno, Lugano, Young Boys, Samsunspor, Sion, Lazio, Switzerland

- Started his career in midfield with Sarajevo, losing in the 1983 Yugoslavian Cup final but featuring twice as his team took the 1984/85 league title, the only major honour of his playing days. Moved to Switzerland in 1987, playing for second-tier Chur and then ascending to the top flight with Sion in 1988/89; returned to the second division to represent Martigny, Bellinzona and Locarno.
- Petković hung up his boots in 1999, aged 36, following a season as player-coach at Bellinzona. Then led Malcantone Agno to promotion from the third division in 2002/03 before becoming the first coach of AC Lugano – successors to FC Lugano.
- Rejoined Bellinzona in October 2005, steering them to the 2007/08 Swiss Cup final, where they lost 4-1 to Basel, but consolation came two weeks later as victory in a relegation/promotion play-off against St Gallen gave Bellinzona a Super League berth.
- Was appointed Young Boys coach in August 2008, guiding them to second-placed finishes in his first two campaigns in charge as well as the 2008/09 Swiss Cup final. After short spells in charge of Turkey's Samsunspor and Sion back in Switzerland, was named Lazio coach in June 2012 and won the Coppa Italia in his first term in Italy, also helping the side to seventh position in the final standings.
- Left in January 2014 after being appointed Switzerland coach Ottmar Hitzfeld's successor, taking the reins after the 2014 FIFA World Cup. Promptly guided his charges to UEFA EURO 2016, where they lost to Poland in the last 16, and to the same stage of the 2018 World Cup, where they were beaten by Sweden.

Erik Hamrén

Date of birth: 27 June 1957

Nationality: Swedish

Playing career: Ljusdal, Stockviks

Coaching career: Njurunda (youth), Sundsvall (youth), Bro (youth), Enköping, Väsby, Brommapojkarna, Vasalund, Degerfors, AIK, Örgryte, AaB, Rosenborg, Sweden, Iceland

- Hamrén's short-lived playing career began with home-town club Ljusdal at 17, but after a two-year spell both there and at Stockviks, he was forced into retirement through injury.
- Began coaching at junior level before taking on his first senior post with Enköping and experienced his first major success nine years later, when he led AIK to victory in the 1996 Swedish Cup – a trophy he successfully defended with the Stockholm side the following year. He also took the team to the quarter-finals of the UEFA Cup Winners' Cup in 1996/97, where they bowed out to eventual winners Barcelona. A third Swedish Cup was added to his CV with Örgryte in 2000.
- After moving abroad in 2004 to join AaB he won the Danish Superliga in 2008, having also led them into the UEFA Cup group stage, then followed up with back-to-back Norwegian championships at Rosenborg.
- During his time in Trondheim he was appointed as the coach of the Swedish national side, doing the two jobs simultaneously until he stepped down from his Rosenborg duties in September 2010 to take charge of Sweden full time. Over the next six years he led his country to the finals of both UEFA EURO 2012 and UEFA EURO 2016, missing out on the 2014 FIFA World Cup only after a qualifying play-off defeat by Portugal.
- After two years out of the game he was recalled to the international arena by Iceland, who appointed him as their new head coach on 8 August 2018 in succession to Heimir Hallgrímsson.

Match officials

Referee	Michael Oliver (ENG)
Assistant referees	Stuart Burt (ENG) , Simon Bennett (ENG)
Additional assistant referees	Craig Pawson (ENG) , Martin Atkinson (ENG)
Fourth official	Stephen Child (ENG)
UEFA Delegate	Duško Grabovac (CRO)
UEFA Referee observer	Nikolay Levnikov (RUS)

Referee

Name	Date of birth		UEFA matches
Michael Oliver	20/02/1985	0	46

UEFA Nations League matches between the two teams

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
17/09/2015	UEL	GS	ACF Fiorentina	FC Basel 1893	1-2	Florence

Competition facts

What is the background to the UEFA Nations League?

The rejuvenation of national team football – and the UEFA Nations League – stems from the desire of UEFA and its 55 member associations to improve the quality and standing of national team football. UEFA and its associations wanted more sporting meaning in national team football, with associations, coaches, players and supporters increasingly of the opinion that friendly matches are not providing adequate competition for national teams.

Extensive consultation and discussions started as far back as the 2011 UEFA Strategy Meeting in Cyprus and continued at a series of Top Executive Programme (TEP) meetings over the following three years. The UEFA Nations League was unanimously adopted at the XXXVIII Ordinary UEFA Congress in Astana on 27 March 2014.

What is the basic format?

The format of the UEFA Nations League features promotion and relegation. The 55 European national teams have been divided into four leagues in accordance with UEFA's national association coefficient rankings on 11 October 2017.

League A includes the top-ranked sides and League D includes the lowest:

League A

Group A1: Germany, France, Netherlands

Group A2: Belgium, Switzerland, Iceland

Group A3: Portugal, Italy, Poland

Group A4: Spain, England, Croatia

Teams have been split into four groups of three, with the group winners then contesting the UEFA Nations League Finals (semi-finals, third-place match and final) in June 2019 to become the UEFA Nations League winners. One host country will be appointed in December 2018 from among the finalist teams.

The four teams that finish bottom of their groups will be relegated to League B for the 2020 edition.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

League B

Group B1: Slovakia, Ukraine, Czech Republic

Group B2: Russia, Sweden, Turkey

Group B3: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Ireland

Group B4: Wales, Republic of Ireland, Denmark

Teams have been split into four groups of three.

The four group winners are promoted to League A, with the four sides that finish bottom relegated to League C for the next competition to be played in 2020.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

League C

Group C1: Scotland, Albania, Israel

Group C2: Hungary, Greece, Finland, Estonia

Group C3: Slovenia, Norway, Bulgaria, Cyprus

Group C4: Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, Lithuania

Teams have been split into one group of three (containing teams from Pots 1, 2 and 3 only) and three groups of four. Due to winter venue restrictions, a group could contain a maximum of two of these teams: Norway, Finland, Estonia, Lithuania.

The four group winners are promoted to League B, with the four sides that finish bottom relegated to League D for the 2020 edition.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

League D

Group D1: Georgia, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Andorra

Group D2: Belarus, Luxembourg, Moldova, San Marino

Group D3: Azerbaijan, Faroe Islands, Malta, Kosovo

Group D4: FYR Macedonia, Armenia, Liechtenstein, Gibraltar

Teams have been split into four groups of four.

Due to excessive travel restrictions, any group could not contain a maximum of one of these pairs: Andorra & Kazakhstan, Faroe Islands & Kazakhstan, Gibraltar & Kazakhstan, Gibraltar & Azerbaijan

The four group winners are promoted to League C for the 2020 edition.

The top four ranked teams that do not qualify for UEFA EURO 2020 will enter a play-off in March 2020, with one final place on offer.

Leagues A and B consist of four groups of three teams

League C comprises one group of three teams and three groups of four sides

League D is formed by four groups of four teams

The League Phase Draw for the UEFA Nations League took place at the SwissTech Convention Centre in Lausanne on 24 January 2018.

In each league, four group winners are promoted (or play in the Finals, see below) and four teams are relegated for the next competition to be played in 2020.

The overall UEFA Nations League rankings will determine the composition of the draw pots for the subsequent European Qualifiers.

In addition, the UEFA Nations League will provide teams with another chance to qualify for the UEFA EURO final tournament, with four sides qualifying through play-off matches which take place in March 2020 (see below).

When will the UEFA Nations League take place?

The UEFA Nations League will take place as follows:

See the full fixture list.

The UEFA Nations League group games are being held over six matchdays, during the 'double-headers' in September, October and November 2018. The UEFA Nations League Finals competition for the teams that win the four groups within the top division is scheduled for June 2019.

For the UEFA Nations League Finals, the group winners of UEFA Nations League A will play in a knockout format (semi-finals, third-place match and final) in June 2019 to become the UEFA Nations League winners. One host country will be formally appointed by the UEFA Executive Committee in December 2018 from one of the nations competing in the final four. Italy, Poland and Portugal (all in Group A3) have expressed interest.

The play-off matches will be staged in March 2020 (see below).

Will qualifying for the UEFA EURO change?

The changes to UEFA EURO qualifying will make it more streamlined. The equation is now simple: ten groups with the top two teams in each group qualifying automatically, and the other four places being awarded to European Qualifiers play-off winners, in which the 16 group winners of the UEFA Nations League will be in contention.

The UEFA EURO 2020 qualifying draw will be made after the completion of the UEFA Nations League and allow for the four UEFA Nations League Finals participants to be drawn into groups of five teams.

But the key principle of the qualifiers remains: that every team can play every team.

The European Qualifiers for UEFA EURO 2020 commence in March 2019. There will be two matchdays in each of March, June, September, October and November 2019. In total, there will be five groups of five teams and five groups of six teams (ten groups in all) playing over ten matchdays (the same number as now). The winner and runner-up in each of the ten groups will qualify automatically for the UEFA EURO 2020 final tournament (June 2020).

The last four EURO places will be won through the European Qualifiers play-offs, which will take place in March 2020 and which will be contested by the 16 UEFA Nations League group winners.

If a group winner has already qualified via the European Qualifiers, then their spot will go to the next best-ranked team in their league. If a league does not have four teams to compete, the remaining slots are allocated to teams from another league, according to the overall UEFA Nations League ranking.

Each league will have a path of its own and each path will feature two single-leg semi-finals and one single-leg final. The winner of each path will win a ticket to UEFA EURO 2020.

How are the overall UEFA Nations League rankings calculated?

Within each league (A, B, C and D), the overall ranking will be calculated based on position in the group then points, goal difference, goals scored, away goals scored, wins, away wins, disciplinary points, coefficient ranking.

What are the advantages for national associations and teams?

National associations and coaches, in consultations with UEFA, revealed that they feel that friendly internationals are not providing adequate sporting competition. The UEFA Nations League creates more meaningful and competitive matches for teams and a dedicated calendar and structure for national team football.

Top teams can also aspire to take part in the UEFA Nations League Finals, a new top-level event.

For middle-ranking and smaller nations, the UEFA Nations League will offer an extra way to qualify for UEFA EURO final tournaments. Lower-tier countries – the bottom 16 in the rankings – are now guaranteed one of the 24 qualifying slots for UEFA EURO.

Lower-ranking teams who have struggled against sides ranked considerably higher than them will now get the chance to take part in balanced matches. Teams do not learn and progress by repeatedly losing; now some sides will start winning.

While the UEFA Nations League will replace most friendly internationals, there will still be space in the calendar for friendlies, especially for top teams who may want to face opposition from outside Europe as they will be in groups of three teams.

Associations and teams benefit from clarity of the fixture calendar, and there is now a clear buffer between the end of the UEFA EURO and FIFA World Cup, and vice versa, as well as stability of income.

What are the advantages for supporters?

Supporters more than most realise that most friendlies fail to deliver competitive and meaningful football. Now they will have the opportunity to see their teams play in more competitive matches, take part in a new competition and get a second chance to qualify for the major tournaments.

In every even year there are World Cup or UEFA EURO champions; now in every odd year there will be a UEFA Nations League winners. Football is about competition and now, just like in club football, there will be a national team champion at the close of every season.

Will this mean more demands on players and clubs?

No: the UEFA Nations League and European Qualifiers will adhere to the existing agreed international match calendar. UEFA is always keen to preserve the balance between club and international football. The new competition should, in fact, reduce demands on players and clubs with less travel envisaged for friendly games while national teams will be playing more consistently at their own level. With double-header matchweeks, players will even go back to their clubs earlier than is currently the case.

Is this just about generating more revenue?

No, finances are not a driver for the new competition. However, the competition will have the same centralised media rights as have recently been introduced for all European Qualifiers so associations will have even more stability in their income.

Will there be no more friendly internationals?

There will certainly be fewer friendly internationals and undoubtedly fewer meaningless friendlies. However, there will still be space in the calendar for friendly internationals – particularly warm-up matches for final tournaments. UEFA is also keen that European teams will still have the chance to play opponents from other confederations.

Match-by-match lineups

Switzerland

UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

Group A2

Team	Pld	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Belgium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Iceland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Switzerland	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Matchday 1 (08/09/2018)

Switzerland-Iceland

Matchday 3 (12/10/2018)

Belgium-Switzerland

Matchday 4 (15/10/2018)

Iceland-Switzerland

Matchday 6 (18/11/2018)

Switzerland-Belgium

Iceland

UEFA Nations League - Group stage – final tournament

Matchday 1 (08/09/2018)

Switzerland-Iceland

Matchday 2 (11/09/2018)

Iceland-Belgium

Matchday 4 (15/10/2018)

Iceland-Switzerland

Matchday 5 (15/11/2018)

Belgium-Iceland

Legend

Competitions

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