

Anderlecht v. AEK Athens FC

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Having masterminded AEK Athens FC's remarkable turnaround in UEFA Champions League Group H, ambitious coach Lorenzo Serra Ferrer intends to finish the job and book a last 16 place at bottom side RSC Anderlecht on Wednesday. Successive wins at home to LOSC Lille Métropole and AC Milan have left the Greek team needing only to better the French club result in Italy to claim second spot behind the Rossoneri (red and black). Bet on Anderlecht v. AEK Athens FC at Bodog.com Serra Ferrer is confident his men can overcome their away day troubles. AEK has not won in eleven trips abroad at this level, but a victory in Brussels would guarantee their passage, leading the Spaniard to explain: "We keep evolving as a team because we like to take risks. I think we're ready to take the next step and get an away win, so I only hope we don't lack self-confidence."

Fresh from securing eight straight league successes, confidence should not be a problem, and Serra Ferrer insists the pressure will not affect his players. Ferrer affirms, "Of course there is stress, but that's completely normal," he said. "It's good to be in a stressful position because it means we are still in contention, but if we work hard everything will be fine. I'll make it clear to the team how big a chance this is for them, and it would be a massive achievement for the club as well." Bet on Anderlecht v. AEK Athens FC at Bodog.com Injuries will complicate their task though, with captain Traianos Dellas and midfield anel Emerson absent, along with Ifeanyi Udeze, Vladimir Ivi? and Panagiotis Lagos, yet the Athens outfit is set to field an attacking lineup. Serra's philosophy is always offensive, and should be even more so for a match like this. Vassilios Lakis should start in a 4-4-2 formation after the foraging midfielder set up both goals for Júlio César in Saturday's 2-0 win against Ionikos FC. The accent will be on attack in the opposition camp too, with Anderlecht still hopeful of grabbing a UEFA Cup spot. For that to happen, the Belgian champions must hope Milan defeat Lille while they themselves see off AEK. Trainer Franky Vercauteren sees enough reasons to be optimistic. "We want to beat them and we believe in ourselves," he said. "One of our goals this season was to continue our European adventure after Christmas and we still have every chance. If we don't think like that, we might as well forget about the match now." In contrast with AEK, Les Mauves need to address their home form before Wednesday's tie. They have starved the locals of a victory in this tournament since 25 November 2003. Second in Belgium following Friday's draw at KSK Beveren, they will also be without suspended centre-back Jelle Van Damme, though Argentinian striker Nicolas Frutos is available again and both Mbo Mpenza and Lucas Biglia appear on almost off of the injury list. In addition, Anderlecht are the only Group H team to have left Athens with a point, thanks to Frutos's strike in September's 1-1 draw. Probable teams: Anderlecht: Daniel Zítka; Anthony Vanden Borre, Nicolas Pareja, Mark De Man, Olivier Deschacht; Lucas Biglia; Mbark Boussoufa, Ahmed Hassan, Bart Goor; Mohamed Tchite, Nicolas Frutos. AEK: Stefano Sorrentino; Martin Pautasso, Bruno Cirillo, Socratis Papastathopoulos, Nikolaos Georgeas; Vassilios Lakis, Gustavo Manduca, Akis Zikos, Dániel T?zsér; Júlio César; Nikolaos Liberopoulos. Bodog.com the draw between these two at +235. I don't see a winner but Anderlecht +135 and AEK +160 all have value.