

BETZE NEWS

FCK NEWS RECAP



'ONE GAME AT A TIME!'

The Red Devils got 2013 off to a good start, tallying seven points in their first three matches. A last-gasp win in the restart fixture away at 1860 Munich was followed by a clear 3-0 home victory over Dynamo Dresden. Foda's men managed to keep their unbeaten streak alive with a draw away to MSV Duisburg but suffered a 1-0 defeat away to Hertha BSC on Matchday 23. However, the Red Devils turned their focus to their next game immediately after their return from the German capital as Foda and his men are eager to add points to their tally in front of their home crowd at the Betzenberg.

"There are eleven games left and 33 points up for grabs. Our top priority is to cement position three and keep our chasers at bay," Foda said after the match in Berlin.

The FCK boss admitted his men had not done enough to win against a more

aggressive side from Berlin. The Red Devils had high ambitions for their game against Hertha, but being reduced to ten men in the 33rd minute, Foda's charges struggled to keep their unbeaten streak alive as a second-half goal from Kluge earned the hosts all three points.

The Red Devils returned to their daily training routine on Tuesday and directed their focus to the next task at hand. Foda's men are well aware that the team from the Ruhr valley won't be a pushover. "We are in a division where anybody can beat anybody regardless of what position you're in the table. We're getting to the business end of the season now, where we are all fighting for something, so every game is going to be a real dogfight," Foda warned his side.

The tactician and his charges are working hard on the training ground every day. "Everyone is working meticulously and



trying his best, both on the pitch and on the training ground," Foda underlined.

The Red Devils are striving to secure the playoff spot and know they must be fully focused in every game and ready to run until they drop. "There is plenty at stake and we must take one game at a time. We've got to go out there every week and try to get three points," FCK captain Albert Bunjaku stated, and his warnings were echoed by defender Dominique Heintz: "We have to go to our limits and beyond, and we can only do it with the help of our fans!"

'PLAY OUR GAME!'

INTERVIEW WITH FRANCO FODA

The Red Devils claimed a 3-0 win over Dresden in the first home game of the year. Were you happy with the team's performance?

Dresden was a difficult opponent, dangerous on the counter-attack. It took us about 15 minutes to get a foothold in the game and once we did we started creating opportunities. We could have finished off the game sooner than we did, but I'm very happy with the victory even if there's still room for improvement.

You aimed to build on this success in Duisburg but had to settle for a goalless draw in the end. What went wrong?

We went to Duisburg wanting to win, but unfortunately, we didn't manage to score a goal. We dominated possession

and created more chances, but the Zebras disrupted our attacking play by committing numerous tactical fouls. We had two clear scoring chances in the closing stages of the first half but failed to finish them off. However, there are also positives to take from the game as we did not allow Duisburg much space and kept a clean sheet.

Matchday 23 saw FCK travel to face Hertha BSC. Are you satisfied with your team's display?

Hertha was more aggressive and we were far too passive. We didn't push forward enough and we didn't put enough pressure on Hertha's defense. All in all, we didn't do enough to win the game.

The Red Devils will play host to VfL Bochum in their next match. What kind



of game are you expecting and how will you approach the game?

Bochum has a lot of potential and a huge amount of individual quality. However, more than anything, I think we need to play our game and focus on ourselves. We certainly analyze our opponent's strengths and weaknesses, but first of all, we want to play our game and pick up another win in front of our home crowd.

VFL BOCHUM LAGGING BEHIND EXPECTATIONS

With origins dating back to 1848, Vfl Bochum is one of the oldest sports clubs in Germany. A third-tier side when the Bundesliga was launched in 1963, Bochum reached the top flight for the first time in 1971. A steady stint in the Bundesliga followed until 1993, but since then the Ruhr valley outfit has been bouncing between the two top divisions. Bochum was last relegated in 2009/10 and just missed out on instant re-promotion in the playoffs the following year.

Things haven't been going according to plan for Vfl Bochum so far this season. The Ruhr valley outfit headed into the 2012/13 campaign aiming for a "near top-five finish" but recorded nine defeats, five draws and three wins in its first 17 rounds of matches.

As a result, Vfl Bochum parted company with head coach Andreas Bergmann in October 2012 after a run of seven

games without a win and in the wake of a 6-1 defeat at FC Erzgebirge Aue, which saw the team fall back into the drop zone. Assistant coach Karsten Neitzel took over head coaching duties on an interim basis before being appointed head coach on November 6, 2012.

Bochum managed to claim two successive wins in its last two games before the winter break and finished the year sitting in 15th position. Neitzel's men also booked their place in the quarter finals of the DFB Cup by defeating 1860 Munich 3-0 five days before Christmas.

However, they failed to pick up where they left off, starting 2013 with a draw in Aalen and a morale-sapping 2-0 home defeat against Regensburg. Despite being hit by severe injury woes, Bochum snatched a 1-0 win away at 1860 Munich on Matchday 22. One week later, however, Neitzel's men were held to a 2-2 draw by MSV Duisburg. The draw left Bo-



chum in 13th position, four points ahead of the relegation playoff spot.

Three days after facing first division side VfB Stuttgart in the round of the last eight of the DFB Cup, Neitzel and his men will go head-to-head with the Red Devils at the Betzenberg. While the Ruhr valley side will be eager to make up for its 2-1 defeat in this season's first-leg tie against FCK, the Red Devils will make every effort to pick up crucial points in their bid for promotion.

'BOCHUM'S UPHEAVAL CONTINUES' INTERVIEW WITH ANDREAS LUTHE

Andreas Luthe, the away win over 1860 Munich put some distance between Bochum and the relegation zone. How serious is the club's situation?

Sitting in 13th place, four points ahead of the relegation playoff spot, we certainly understand the gravity of the situation. However, having picked up eleven points from our last six games, we are enjoying an upturn in form.

Karsten Neitzel took over head coaching duties in October 2012, with Bochum sitting 17th in the standings. How did he inspire the team?

Playing with two holding midfielders makes us more efficient in covering space. We have only conceded three

goals from open play in our last eight games and have scored at least one goal in every game except one with Neitzel at the helm.

After a long stint in the top flight, Bochum has been bouncing between the two top divisions of German soccer since 1993. What are the club's long-term ambitions?

We certainly want to return to the top flight. This is where the club belongs. However, we just missed out on promotion to the top flight in the playoffs in 2011. We have a limited budget and must have staying power, patience, and perseverance.

What kind of game are you expecting against the Red Devils?



There is going to be a lot of passion. The Red Devils cannot afford to drop any more points if they are to secure position three in the Bundesliga 2 standings. They find themselves under increasing pressure and will push forward straight from the off in front of their home crowd. We are the underdogs, but we certainly go to Kaiserslautern wanting to win.

MASTHEAD

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