

Aston Villa 4-2 Liverpool: Watkins Double Seals Champions League Spot Ahead of Istanbul Final

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Aston Villa 4â??2 Liverpool â?? Unai Emeryâ??s side produced a dazzling performance at Villa Park on 15 May 2026 to secure their place in next seasonâ??s UEFA Champions League, with Ollie Watkins scoring twice in a thrilling victory that leaves Liverpoolâ??s top-four fate hanging by a thread.

Aston Villa Confirm Champions League Football With Stunning Win

The Villans needed a result to guarantee Champions League football regardless of what happened elsewhere, and they delivered in style. Morgan Rogers broke the deadlock just before the break, curling a superb corner-routine finish into the bottom corner on 42 minutes to send Villa Park into delirium.



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Source: Aston Villa FC official website (avfc.co.uk)

Liverpool responded through Virgil van Dijkâ??s towering header from a Szoboszlai free-kick on 52 minutes to level, but Villaâ??s superiority was evident and they quickly reasserted themselves. Ollie Watkins restored the lead on 57 minutes, then added a second on 73 minutes with a clinical finish that showcased exactly why his name will be on the England World Cup squad sheet this summer. John McGinn put the gloss on proceedings in the 89th minute, with van Dijkâ??s second effort for Liverpool a consolation in added time to make it 4â??2.

Watkins Stars as Emeryâ??s Villa Hit Their Peak

Watkinsâ?? two-goal haul took his tally for the season to 21 Premier League goals â?? a career-best â?? and the strikerâ??s all-round performance was a masterclass in modern centre-forward play. His movement constantly unsettled Liverpoolâ??s defensive structure, and both goals were taken with ice-cool composure.

For Emery, this victory represents the fulfilment of the project he began at Villa Park. In just over two full seasons at the helm, he has taken the club from a top-half midtable side to Champions League

regulars. Villa have now finished in the top five of the Premier League for two consecutive seasons â?? a feat the club has not managed since the mid-1990s.

John McGinn, a player who embodies everything about this Villa side, capped the night perfectly with a thumping finish in the closing stages. It was his seventh goal of the season and a reminder that Villaâ??s quality runs deep throughout the squad.

Eyes Turn to Istanbul â?? and Liverpoolâ??s Last-Day Peril

With Champions League football banked, Villa can now focus entirely on Wednesdayâ??s UEFA Europa League Final against SC Freiburg in Istanbul â?? a genuinely historic occasion for a club that last appeared in a European final in 1982 when they won the European Cup in Rotterdam. Emery, who has won this competition four times before, will fancy his chances against a Freiburg side making their continental debut.

For Liverpool, the mood is very different. Arne Slotâ??s side remain without a guaranteed top-four berth and must win their final game against Brentford to be sure. The Redsâ?? away form has been a persistent disappointment this season, and they will be desperate to avoid a summer without Champions League football. The wider implications for the Premier League top-four and relegation battle remain in flux heading into the final round of fixtures.

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As for Villa Park itself, it basked in a night to remember. The atmosphere was electric from the opening whistle â?? a fitting tribute to a team that has given supporters some of the most exciting football in the clubâ??s recent history.

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