

Barcelona v Villarreal Preview: Flick Welcomes KoundÃ©, De Jong and Olmo Back, but Christensen Misses Out

Description

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Barcelona v Villarreal at Spotify Camp Nou on Sunday 22 November 2026 is the game that restarts La Liga after the international break. Kick-off is 2pm in Spain, which works out to 9pm in Singapore. Hansi Flick has Jules KoundÃ©, Frenkie de Jong and Dani Olmo available, but the injury list still has a couple of names on it.

Barcelona v Villarreal: why this fixture bites

On paper, this looks like a home banker. BarÃ§aâ??s own preview, though, opens with a warning: it calls this a traditionally difficult fixture, and the numbers back it up. Barcelona have lost two of their last five meetings with Villarreal, and the Yellow Submarine have won three of the last five at Barcelona.

There is a bigger stat hiding in there. Since 2021/22, no team has taken as many La Liga wins at BarÃ§a as Villarreal, a record they share with Real Madrid. That is a strange club to be sitting alongside, and it explains why nobody at the Ciutat Esportiva is treating Sunday as a free hit.

Villarreal arrive with their own questions. The club preview has them eighth in La Liga and 28th in the Champions League league phase, and they have won only two of their eight away league games this season. IÃ±igo PÃ©rez is the new coach, and BarÃ§aâ??s preview says he has not yet produced a positive trend.

The timing adds to the edge. BarÃ§a return to domestic action after a break that sent players across the globe, and Flick has only a short window to get everyone back into the same rhythm. Villarreal, meanwhile, have nothing to lose and a run of away form that badly needs a lift. That mix usually makes for a lively afternoon in Catalonia.



Source: FC Barcelona official website (fcbarcelona.com)

Flick on a busy run: who is in and who is out

Flick spoke to the media on Saturday 21 November, and his mood matched the headline on the club site: â??We are in a good moment.â?• He also made it clear that the next few weeks are about squad management. BarÃ§a play nine matches in 27 days, and he says the aim is still to win every competition.

The good news is mostly in midfield and defence. KoundÃ© is ready to play, Olmo is available again, and De Jong is fit despite a slight discomfort he picked up on international duty. Flick said he is â??very happy with Frenkieâ?•, which suggests the Dutchman is in the plans.

The bad news is at centre-back. Andreas Christensen has a slight calf problem and is expected to miss around two matches, according to the club. Pau CubarsÃ also has some discomfort, and his progress will be assessed. Flick was protective of the teenager, saying: â??We have to look after him. Heâ??s 19 years old and has played a lot of games.â?•

The centre-back puzzle

With Christensen out and CubarsÃ a worry, the back line is the one area where Flick may have to improvise. KoundÃ©â??s return helps, because he can cover several positions across the back four. Villarreal have enough pace and movement to punish any mix-up, so partnerships will matter more than names.

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Source: FC Barcelona official website (fcbarcelona.com)

What to watch on Sunday night

Start with the first 20 minutes. Villarreal have been awkward visitors at Camp Nou for years, and an early goal for either side would shape the whole evening. BarÃ§a will want to keep the ball and push their full-backs high, while Villarreal will hope to hit them on the break.

Then look at the rotation. With nine games coming in under four weeks, Flick has said he must manage playing time, so do not be surprised if a few minutes are shared out in the second half. After a two-week break, rhythm is the other talking point: some of the squad have been away with their national teams, and the group is only now back together.

For fans in Singapore, the club says its live match centre and the official app carry free coverage, along with BarÃ§a Live on BarÃ§a Play and the club YouTube channel. Broadcasters vary by region, so check local listings for a TV option. A 9pm start is a decent fit for a Sunday night in Singapore, and this one should keep you up.

The verdict? BarÃ§a have the better squad and the home crowd, but the history says respect Villarreal. If Flick gets the defensive balance right, the points should stay in Catalonia. If not, expect a long and uncomfortable evening.

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