

Getafe 0-1 Brighton: Yalcouyeâ??s Header Keeps Albion Clean in Europe

Description

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Getafe 0-1 Brighton was a study in patience. Malick Yalcouyeâ??s close-range header in the 64th minute separated the sides on Thursday night, giving Fabian Hurzelerâ??s team a deserved second league phase win in the Conference League and extending a run that now stands at five European games without conceding.



Source: Brighton & Hove Albion official website (brightonandhovealbion.com). Photo: James Boardman

A professional away performance

Albionâ??s official match report called it â??utterly professionalâ?•, and that is fair. Getafe, 13th in La Liga and playing at the Estadio Coliseum while it is being rebuilt, made a predictably quick start but never really troubled Bart Verbruggen. Brighton drew the sting out of the contest, settled, and then took control after the break.

It has been a strong run for the Sussex club. They have now lost just once in their last 13 games, with the only recent defeat a 2-0 loss at Liverpool on 25 October. In Europe, they are yet to concede in five

matches in the competition.



Source: Brighton & Hove Albion official website (brightonandhovealbion.com). Photo: James Boardman

Getafe 0-1 Brighton: how the game was won

A slow first half, one big chance

Georginio was off target twice and then did well down the left to pull the ball across the face of goal, where Yasin Ayari stretched but failed to make contact at the far post. Verbruggenâ??s only real work

came when he got down to keep out Ivan Azonâ??s close-range shot with a strong left hand.

Albion should have led on 38 minutes. Rutter found Jaouen Hadjamâ??s run into the inside right channel, Azon hesitated coming off his line, and Hadjam flicked the ball past him and against the post. The rebound fell to Yalcouye, but Johan Mojica blocked his effort on the line.



Source: Brighton & Hove Albion official website (brightonandhovealbion.com). Photo: James Boardman

The breakthrough

Hadjam had an impressive night. Early in the second half he curled a shot from the edge of the box that kissed the crossbar with Azon beaten, and half-time substitute Luka Vuskovic drove a right-footed effort from 25 yards just wide. The goal felt inevitable. Costinha nodded a header into the box from the right and Yalcouye met it perfectly, the ball bouncing up and in off the underside of the crossbar. It was his fourth goal of the season.

Georginio then beat Djene Dakonam and burst into the box, but with Pascal Gross unmarked for a tap-in he chose to shoot and failed to test Azon. With 12 minutes left, substitute Ibrahim Osman slid in to meet Diego Gomezâ??s cross from the right and could not find the target. More goals would have flattered Albion, but not by much.

Hadjam and the wide areas

If there was a man of the match candidate beyond the goalscorer, it was Hadjam. He hit the post, hit the bar and ran the right channel all night, giving Getafeâ??s back line a problem they never solved. His movement off the ball, combined with Rutterâ??s weighted passing, was the most dangerous attacking pattern on the pitch, and it will be fascinating to see how often Hurzeler leans on it in the Premier League.

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On the other flank, Georginio continued to be a handful, using his strength to shake off defenders. His only frustration was the decision-making at the end of his bursts, and that is a fixable problem.

Talking points for Hurzeler

First, the defence. Lewis Dunk was solid before making way at half-time for Vuskovic, and the back line has looked organised without much fuss. Verbruggen made a single save all night, which says plenty about how Albion controlled the game.

Second, the finishing. Brighton created enough to win by two or three, and Hurzeler will want sharper decisions in the final third. The travelling supporters did not seem to mind, staying behind to acknowledge the players at the final whistle.

Third, the schedule. Domestic duty returns on the weekend, with a Premier League home game against Brentford listed for Sunday. European football brings its demands, but if the Conference League does not derail them, this team looks well placed to stay in the chase for a top-four spot. Another English side in the same competition week, Manchester United, also had a Champions League night to remember, as our Manchester United 3-2 Roma report shows.

Hurzeler also spoke to the media in Spanish and English before the game, a nice touch given the setting, and that attention to detail seems to be reflected in a squad that handled the occasion with real maturity. A second league phase win keeps Albion well in the conversation for a spot in the knockout stages, and the clean sheet record is something opponents will be thinking about.

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