

La Liga Weekend

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Friday, 06 April 2007
Last Updated Monday, 16 April 2007

The title race in Spain is set to be one of the closest for many years, with four clubs separated by just six points. All hold realistic chances of taking the Primera crown, while the scramble for European qualification makes the end-of-season run-in even more exciting. If you're going to make things even more interesting by betting on La Liga, make sure you maximise your profits by using PinnacleSports.com offering up to 60% better odds on Asian Handicaps.

Zaragoza Stake Their Claim for Champions League Spot

When Agapito Iglesias took sole control of Real Zaragoza in May of 2006 he promised to build one of the strongest teams in Europe. Almost one year on and the Blanquillos might not be world-beaters just yet, but they are only three points away from fourth place in the Primera Liga, and the chance of Champions League football. In that context, Saturday's home game against league leaders Barcelona should be an exciting encounter. Zaragoza are unbeaten in six games at La Romareda, which included a 2-1 win over Sevilla, currently in second place.

These sides met twice in a recent Copa Del Rey quarter-final, when both won away from home. The aggregate score finished 2-2 but Barcelona progressed thanks to their two goals at La Romareda. Zaragoza are recognised as Copa Del Rey specialists (winning in 2001 & 2004) but there is no reason that this league clash won't be as tight, though they will have to keep close tabs on Samuel Eto'o. The Cameroon striker is showing signs of returning to his best form with three goals in his last two league outings. PinnacleSports.com price Barcelona favourites at 2.05 (-0.5), with Real Zaragoza 1.877 (+0.5).

Sevilla Facing Crucial Stage in Season

Sevilla are approaching a crucial stage in their season with three games in seven days. The reigning UEFA Cup holders face two quarter-final games in quick succession against Tottenham Hotspur, and sandwiched between those encounters is a crucial La Liga at home to Racing Santander. Sevilla are currently second in the table, searching for their second Primera crown after a wait of 61 years.

This is an equally crucial game for Santander. Following their nine goal weekend thriller at home to Bilbao, which they won 5-4, Racing are now just one point away from a UEFA Cup place. The side from Northern Spain are arguably in better form than Sevilla, having lost just one of their last 11 fixtures (at the Nou Camp). In contrast Sevilla are struggling to score goals, drawing a blank in three of their last five games, including on the weekend when Osasuna frustrated them with a goal-less draw. Despite their fixture congestion PinnacleSports.com price Sevilla favourites 2.23 (-1) with Racing Santander 1.752 (+1).

Real Madrid Keeping Pressure on Top Two

Having been knocked out of the Champions League by Bayern Munich, success in La Liga is crucial for Real Madrid to avoid a fourth consecutive season without a trophy. The rumours have been flying that whatever happens, coach Fabio Capello will be leaving at the end of the season, so the Italian will want to silence his doubters with league success. Los Blancos are unbeaten in their last seven La Liga fixtures, but four of those were drawn, so it would be wrong to say that Real are firing on all cylinders, but the close nature of this year's title race leaves them with a real chance of prevailing, sitting five points behind Barca.

Madrid have home advantage in their game against Osasuna, and under normal circumstances that would be considered a big plus, but the side have actually been more effective away from the pressure on the Bernabeu. It should benefit Capello's side to face an Osasuna side distracted by the UEFA Cup. The Rojillos play their quarter-finals against Bayer Leverkusen either side of this fixture, giving them three games in seven days, and a selection head-ache for Jose Ziganda. Given the side have nothing to play for in the league, being anchored in mid-table, Ziganda could be forgiven for resting players at the Bernabeu, which will be to Madrid's distinct advantage. They have beaten Osasuna in four of the last five meetings and PinnacleSports.com make them favourites 2.10 (-1) with the visitors 1.833 (+1).

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