

((WATCH LIVE!)) Shamrock Rovers vs PAOK Live free 29 August 2024

7 min ago - After cruising to a four-goal first-leg triumph in Greece, PAOK will be looking to finish the job in Ireland against Shamrock Rovers in the return fixture of their Europa League playoff tie on Thursday.



The winners of this two-legged tie will qualify for the newly-expanded 36-team Europa League, while the losers will drop down into the Europa Conference League.

Shamrock's hopes of qualifying for the Europa League proper for just the second time in their history are hanging by the finest of threads, after they were heavily beaten 4-0 by PAOK away from home in last week's first leg.

It looked as if the Hoops would enter half time level until Daniel Cleary's own goal handed PAOK the lead in the fourth minute of first-half stoppage time, before Taison added a second for the Greek visitors just two minutes after the interval.

Josh Honohan was then sent off for Shamrock on the 52-minute mark for a second bookable offense, and PAOK took advantage by netting their third and fourth goals through Giannis Konstantelias and Baba Rahman to all but secure their place in the Europa League.

Stephen Bradley has admitted that "winning the tie is near impossible" for his Shamrock side, but he still has aspirations of at least coming out on top in the second leg and want his players to "reproduce" their first-half performance from Greece in order to achieve that on home soil.

Shamrock have since played out a 1-1 draw with Galway United in the League of Ireland Premier, meaning that they have won just three of their last 11 matches in all competitions and have slipped 10 points behind league leaders Derry City, who have played two games more.

PAOK, meanwhile, have kick-started the defence of their Greek Super League title in positive fashion, as they have won their opening two matches of the new season, following up a 3-2 win over Panserraikos with a 2-0 victory against Panaitolikos last weekend.

Second-half strikes from Joan Sastre and Tarik Tissoudali helped the Aspromavri claim their third successive win within the space of eight days, much to the delight of head coach Razvan Lucescu, whose team were left disappointed by their elimination in the Champions League qualifiers earlier this month.

PAOK's recent success has all taken place on home soil and they are now gearing up for just their second competitive away match of the season and their first since playing out a 2-2 Champions League draw with Malmo on August 6; PAOK have lost just five of their 18 away games since the beginning of this year.