



INSIGHTS

Serie A Play-Out 2022-23
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SPEZIA

Vs

HELLAS VERONA



This will be the 13th season in which maintaining the Serie A status of at least two teams will be decided through a relegation playoff; the last such match in the top-flight was played at the end of 2004/05, in a two-legged meeting between Parma and Bologna (in that case, Bologna were relegated to Serie B, after a 1-0 win in the first leg and a 2-0 defeat in the second leg).

The relegation play-off in Serie A between Spezia and Hellas Verona will be decided in a single match; the last time two teams faced each other in a match decided within the 90 minutes of play in the top-flight to avoid relegation to Serie B was in 1996/97, when Piacenza and Cagliari faced each other (Piacenza avoided relegation with a 3-1 win).

In Serie A history, this will be the sixth time (out of 13 overall) that two teams will face each other in a one-off match to avoid relegation; in only one of these instances has it been determined by a penalty shootout (in 1994/95, as Genoa were relegated after facing Padova).

The game between Spezia and Hellas Verona will be played at a neutral venue, while the last relegation play-off on neutral ground was back in June 1997, between Piacenza and Cagliari (Cagliari relegated). Since then, the relegation play-off has been contested in three seasons (2000/01, 2002/03 and 2004/05) with two-legged ties.

Hellas Verona will play a relegation play-off to avoid relegation from the top-flight for the second time in their history. The previous instance was in the 2000/01 season, when Verona secured safety against Reggina with a 1-0 win in the first leg (goal by Laursen) and a 1-2 defeat in the second leg (2-2 aggregate score), under Attilio Perotti.

Hellas Verona finished the 2022/23 season with 31 points in the standings; in the era of three points for a win (since 1994/95), Verona had only collected as few points on three previous occasions: 27 in 1996/97, 28 in 2015/16, and 25 in 2017/18.

Spezia conceded 62 goals in the regular season of the 2022/23 Serie A campaign: this was the lowest number of goals conceded by them in their three top-flight seasons to date (71 in 2021/22 and 72 in 2020/21).

Hellas Verona are the team that have lost the most points from winning positions in Serie A in 2022-23 (26 points) - only Nottingham Forest (27) and Troyes (28) dropped fewer across Europe's big five leagues.

Dimitrios Nikolaou scored his first goal in 76 Serie A matches in the last round of the season against Roma. The Spezia defender has had a shot on target in each of the two most recent matches (against Roma and Torino), which was more than in all his previous 74 appearances in the competition (one).



Among the teams he has faced at least five times in Serie A, Spezia are only one of three (along with Juventus and Inter) opponents that Simone Verdi has scored against but never ended on the winning side (D3 L2). One of his four braces in the competition came against Spezia in February 2022, while playing for Salernitana.