

Lionel Messi meets Robert Lewandowski as Barcelona faces Bayern Munich in a clash of titans

By Ben Church, CNN

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(CNN) — The [UEFA Champions League](#) was simply made for ties such as the one this Friday in Lisbon.

German champion [Bayern Munich](#) is set to clash with [Barcelona](#) in the standout matchup of this season's quarterfinals in a game that will also see two of Europe's most prolific players come head to head.

On the one hand, there is [Lionel Messi](#). There is nothing left to be said about Barcelona's mercurial magician who scored yet another wonderful solo goal in his side's 3-1 victory over Napoli in the previous round.

But, arguably, there has been no better player in world football this season than Bayern's Robert Lewandowski.

The 31-year-old striker has scored 13 goals in just seven matches in this season's competition, recording one of the most impressive goals to minute ratio in the tournament's illustrious history (a goal every 47 minutes).

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The Poland international is also just four goals behind Cristiano Ronaldo's record of 17 goals in a single Champions League campaign and, given his form, is likely to come close if Bayern can progress deeper into the draw -- and you wouldn't put that past this current team.

The Bundesliga club has won 18 successive matches across all competitions, bulldozing past Chelsea 7-1 on aggregate in the last 16, and has its eyes set on a treble this season -- having already claimed the league and domestic cup.

"Naturally Barcelona have enough quality to produce the best of themselves in one game, but I think Bayern will have to make many mistakes and do many things wrong to lose against this Barcelona," former Bayern player Lothar Matthäus told Sky Sport Germany.

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Lionel Messi and Robert Lewandowski will face each other on Friday.

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Messi

However, standing in its way is five-time European champion Barcelona.

The Catalan club finished second in La Liga, behind fierce rival Real Madrid, and has endured a difficult year both on and off the pitch.

Its form that has already called the future of manager Quique Setien into question but his side does have something no other club has -- Messi.

The Argentine has uncharacteristically been involved in public disputes with the club's hierarchy this season but has often carried the team on the pitch.

The 33-year-old has scored 31 goals in all competitions so far -- albeit down on his usual haul -- and looked unplayable at times against Napoli.

Messi will also be hoping to go level with rival Ronaldo on five career Champions League titles.

"It will be tough for us because they've had an excellent season and dominated their tie," Setien told reporters ahead of the match.

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Bayern might well be favorites heading into Friday's tie but given the new one-match format, replacing the two-legged ties due to the coronavirus pandemic, anything could happen when the two sides meet in Lisbon.

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