From Koeman’s free-kick to Euro 96: Five Netherlands v England clashes

AFP- The Netherlands and England meet in the last four of Euro 2024 on Wednesday with both teams eyeing a place in this weekend’s final in Berlin.

There was a time when the two nations met regularly on the international stage, but the match in Dortmund will be just the second competitive game between the sides this century.

AFP Sport looks back at their most notable past encounters:

– Van Basten hat-trick –

The 1988 European Championship remains the only major international tournament that the Netherlands have won, and will always be remembered for Marco van Basten’s stunning goal in the final against the Soviet Union.

It also remains a low point for England, the only time in which they have gone to a major tournament and lost every game.

Both sides lost their opening match before they clashed in Duesseldorf in the group phase, and the Dutch came out on top thanks to a Van Basten hat-trick.

England had chances, with Gary Lineker and Glenn Hoddle both hitting the post. Van Basten’s opener for the Netherlands was cancelled out by a Bryan Robson equaliser just after half-time, but two goals in five second-half minutes allowed Van Basten to complete his hat-trick and sealed a 3-1 Dutch win.

– Draw at Italia 90 –

The nations were again drawn in the same group at the 1990 World Cup in Italy, and many of the players involved in 1988 again featured in this meeting in Cagliari, among them current Dutch boss Ronald Koeman.

The sides had each drawn their opening match, with England being held by Ireland and the Netherlands by Egypt. This time England kept Van Basten quiet in a 0-0 draw, and it was England who would top the group on the way to reaching the semi-finals. The Dutch, meanwhile, were beaten by West Germany in the last 16.

– England miss out on USA 94 –

England have failed to qualify for just one World Cup since the 1970s, and it was the Netherlands who denied them a place at USA 94.

Graham Taylor's England had a poor campaign, taking just one point from two games against Norway, who topped the group. They squandered a two-goal lead at home to the Dutch at Wembley, but when they went to Rotterdam for the return fixture – their penultimate game in the group – England still had qualification in their own hands as they were above the Dutch.

With Paul Gascoigne suspended, England fell behind to a free-kick just after the hour mark by Koeman – who the visitors felt should have been sent off earlier on – before Dennis Bergkamp sealed a 2-0 Dutch win.

England beat San Marino in their final game but a Dutch win in Poland ensured they qualified instead. It was a disastrous campaign for Taylor, captured in a warts-and-all TV documentary. Taylor later resigned, while the Dutch reached the World Cup quarter-finals.

– Shearer, Sheringham double act –

The nations met again in the group stage at Euro 96. Both teams had taken four points from their first two matches before clashing at Wembley, where Alan Shearer opened the scoring with a penalty and added another goal early in the second half, in between a brace by Teddy Sheringham.

Patrick Kluivert's late goal for the Dutch made the final score 4-1 as England – who had current boss Gareth Southgate in defence – won the group and the Netherlands squeezed through in second place ahead of Scotland.

The Dutch lost on penalties to France in the last eight, while England were beaten in a shoot-out in the semi-finals by Germany, with Southgate missing the crucial kick.

– Dutch win Nations League semi –

The only competitive meeting of the teams since Euro 96 came in the semi-finals of the inaugural UEFA Nations League in 2019.

Southgate was already England's manager and Koeman was in his first spell as Dutch coach as the teams clashed in Guimaraes, Portugal.

Marcus Rashford put England ahead from a penalty but Matthijs de Ligt levelled, taking the game to extra time.

Kyle Walker's own goal gave the Dutch the lead and Quincy Promes sealed a 3-1 victory for the Netherlands, who would lose the final to hosts Portugal.

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