

= 2000 ? 01 S.L. Benfica season =

The 2000 ? 01 season was Sport Lisboa e Benfica 's 97th season in existence , and the club 's 67th consecutive season in the Primeira Liga . It ran from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001 . Benfica competed domestically in the Primeira Liga and the Taça de Portugal . The club also participated in the UEFA Cup , by virtue of finishing third in that tournament the previous season .

The season is the worst in Benfica history since the start of the Primeira Liga during 1934 ? 35 . The club switched managers two times . Jupp Heynckes was replaced by José Mourinho in September . Toni , who previously guided the club to a league title , took the reins in December . In the transfer market , young players like Marchena and Fernando Meira were brought in , and mixed with the experience of 31 year @-@ old , Pierre van Hooijdonk , who arrived to replace Nuno Gomes , were meant to improve the team competitiveness . However , the biggest event of the pre @-@ season was the release of João Pinto , the longest @-@ serving player on the club , and the incumbent captain . This decision was poorly received by the fans , who criticized Heynckes and the president for the move . Both would leave the club in the following months . In the league campaign , the team lacked balance year @-@ round and only briefly entered the league race , spending all but three weeks out the top three . Even the successful partnership of Pierre van Hooijdonk and João Tomás , with 36 goals between them , did not prevent the club from finishing in sixth place , 23 points behind winner Boavista . Consequently , Benfica missed out on UEFA competitions for the first time in 51 years (since the 1959 ? 60 season) .

= = Season summary = =

= = = Pre @-@ season = = =

Preparations for a new Benfica season started in late @-@ May 2000 . Manager Jupp Heynckes remained for a second year , with more control this time in building up the squad . His choices caused immediate controversy , the biggest being the release of Benfica veteran João Pinto . Pinto was the incumbent team captain and the longest @-@ serving player , who had been at Benfica since the 1992 ? 93 season . José Manuel Delgado of Record predicted a difficult season for the German manager : " ... he will have less tolerance from the fans than that offered to Artur Jorge (three match days) , or Manuel José (four match days) ... " He forwent internationals like Paulo Bento and Amaral , but indulged on Marchena , Meira and Van Hooijdonk . The last was intended to replace Nuno Gomes , who moved to Fiorentina after a successful run at Euro 2000 . All of this spending happened in spite of club @-@ wide financial difficulties , from missed salaries for Michael Thomas , to the basketball section of the club going months without pay .

The pre @-@ season started on 7 July , with a schedule of 8 games . It included a match celebrating the 50th anniversary of Olympique Lyon , and the Carlsberg Belfast Challenge against Linfield and Liverpool . Benfica ended the pre @-@ season on 11 August , with a draw against Aston Villa .

= = = August ? October = = =

Benfica started their 2000 ? 01 Primeira Liga campaign on the road in a Clássico match against FC Porto , on 19 August 2000 . João Marcelino stated that Porto " ... had some luck in the way they obtained their first goal (shot from Alenichev deflected off Calado and betrayed Enke) ... " , allowing them to manage the lead until the end . Benfica 's first home game was against Beira @-@ Mar on 27 August . At ten minutes into the second half of that game , Maniche 's goal put Benfica up 3 ? 0 , setting them up for victory .

September began for Benfica with a visit to Leiria . It was a hard @-@ fought match , in which referee José Leirós gave out twelve bookings . They narrowly escaped defeat when Chano scored in stoppage time . Benfica started their European season on 14 September in Sweden , with a 1 ? 2

loss to host Halmstads . Benfica won their second home game of the season , on 18 September , against Estrela da Amadora , thanks to two goals scored by Van Hooijdonk in consecutive minutes near the end of regulation time . In the post @-@ match interview , following weeks of fan pressure , club manager Heynckes lost his calm and proclaimed : " I can 't take this club anymore . If they want me gone , I 'll leave tomorrow . " He was immediately let go , and replaced with 37 @-@ year @-@ old José Mourinho . Former player Mozer joined him as assistant . It was Mourinho 's first time as manager , having previously worked only as an interpreter for Bobby Robson and Louis van Gaal . His first game as manager was on the road against Boavista , in which his team lost 0 ? 1 to a goal from ex @-@ Benfica player Duda . The second leg of the UEFA Cup was a home game played on 28 September at the Estádio da Luz . It ended in a 2 ? 2 draw and they were eliminated from the tournament ? a result reminiscent of their 1997 ? 98 season .

Benfica started October with a home game against Braga . The visitors took the lead in the first half , but João Tomás and Van Hooijdonk responded with a goal each , reversing the score in the second half . However , Braga went on to equalize with a last @-@ minute goal , costing Benfica two points . On 15 October , Benfica won its third league game of the season by defeating Belenenses one ? nil behind Marchena 's goal . The team played Paços de Ferreira on the 21st , dropping two points in a 0 ? 0 draw . Benfica played their last game of the month against Campomaiorense on the 29th , winning with a double from João Tomás , scored within a space of ten minutes from each other . They finished the month in seventh place on the league table , nine points behind leader Porto .

= = = November ? February = = =

Benfica faced Marítimo in an away game at the beginning of November . They lost 0 ? 3 , to a hat @-@ trick from Lagorio . Without a single road game victory , the team dropped to tenth in the league 's standings . They hosted Farense in the second week of November and won 2 ? 1 . Van Hooijdonk and João Tomás scored a goal each , within a 4 @-@ minute interval just before the final whistle , to give their team the three points . On 18 November , Benfica played Vitória de Guimarães on the road . They took the lead near the end of the first half , with a goal from Chano . The second half saw three additional goals , all by João Tomás . It was their first win as visitors , and they climbed to sixth place in the standings . Benfica played their last game of the month , on the 26th , at the Taça de Portugal against Campomaiorense . This fourth round match was won thanks to a late goal by Sabry .

Benfica started December with a Derby de Lisboa game against Sporting . They won 3 ? 0 , with a first half goal by Van Hooijdonk and two goals in a five @-@ minute span from João Tomás . Following the win , Mourinho requested a contract extension as a demonstration of faith in the work he had put in along with his assistant : " Me [Mourinho] and Mozer thought that the only way to end speculation and the constant threat of being sacked in the event of a bad result ... was renewing our contracts for another season . " Their proposal was not met . They parted ways with the club through an announcement in a press conference : " He [President Vilarinho] thought it was better not to accept our request . We understood that decision showed a lack of trust in our work , and that we should offer our resignation ... " Benfica immediately appointed Toni ? a long @-@ time favourite of the President ? as the new manager . On 10 December , Benfica played Alverca away from home . They opened the score sheet with a goal from João Tomás close to half @-@ time , but Mantorras equalized . Later , Milinkovic put the Ribatejo side in the lead , resulting in the fourth loss in seven matches in away games for Benfica . In the last match of the year 2000 , Benfica met a struggling Gil Vicente , who were at the bottom of the Primeira Liga standings . Unable to unlock the 0 ? 0 draw , the club suffered their eighth winless league game of the season .

Early in January , Benfica played away from home , at Louletano , in a fifth round match of the Taça de Portugal . They won 3 ? 1 and progressed to the next knock @-@ out stage , where they would face Porto . Benfica resumed their league campaign on the 7th , visiting Salgueiros . They won their second away game , after Van Hooijdonk scored with nine minutes remaining on the clock . They went on to win their third match in a row on 13 January , with a 5 ? 1 home @-@ game win against

Desportivo Aves . Benfica took an early lead with a Van Hooijdonk goal in the 15th minute , and added two more in the first half , one by Carlitos and another from an own goal . The Dutch striker added two more goals to his tally in the second half . On 17 January , Benfica received Porto for the first of three consecutive games against them . The first game was part of the Taça de Portugal and ended in a 1 ? 1 draw . Maniche scored the lone Benfica goal before Maric equalized for Porto . A rematch was held to settle the tie . Four days later , on Sunday , Benfica hosted Porto for a Portuguese league match . They defeated the visitors 2 ? 1 , after a goal from Van Hooijdonk in the 81st minute . This win allowed the club to climb to fourth in the league 's standings ? their best position all year . The last of three games saw Benfica succumb to a four @-@ nil loss in the rematch for the Portuguese Cup . Manuel Queiroz wrote : " ... A thrashing that did not transpire what really happened in the field , because Fernando Santos ' team ? in the best performance of the season ? completely demolished a Benfica that never entered the game ... " Benfica 's last game of the month was played on the road on the 29th , against the Aveiro side , Beira @-@ Mar. The match ended with a 3 ? 1 win for Benfica , after another double for Van Hooijdonk . João Tomás also got on the score sheet .

On 4 February , the team beat União de Leiria at home by 3 goals to 2 . Benfica took the lead with a goal from João Tomás . Roger and Van Hooijdonk increased their lead by two goals , until Nuno Valente settled the final score . With this win , Benfica climbed to second place the league , now only five points behind leader Boavista . On the 16th , Benfica played Estrela da Amadora away from home . The game ended with a 2 ? 1 victory for Benfica . Along with Boavista 's loss in Braga , this further reduced Benfica 's separation from the league leader . Benfica played their last match of February on the 25th against Boavista . Benfica had an opportunity to take the top place in the league table with a victory in that game , but they were unsuccessful at breaking the 0 ? 0 draw . Van Hooijdonk had the best chance in the 78th minute , but his attempt struck the goalpost .

= = = March ? May = = =

Benfica began March with an away game in Braga . They lost 3 ? 1 in their first league loss since December . They dropped to fourth place in the standings . On the following Saturday , Benfica visited Belenenses and lost for a second time in a row . A week later , Benfica received Paços de Ferreira at home . The match ended with a 3 ? 2 win for the visitors and Benfica dropped to fifth place . They were now eleven points behind leader Boavista . In the last game of March , Benfica faced Campomaiorense on the road . With a 1 ? 1 draw , the team avoided losing all of their matches in March . However , their need to get points was aggravated , especially if they wanted to qualify for the European competitions .

In April , Benfica opened at home against Marítimo , with a squad composed mainly of reserve players . A 3 ? 0 win helped get closer to both Braga and Sporting in the standings . On 13 April , Benfica visited Faro . The match ended in a 2 ? 2 draw despite a Benfica having a first @-@ half lead . Nine days later , Benfica played Vitória de Guimarães at home . A sole goal from Sabry in the 31st minute was enough to secure the team 's second win in April . Closing out the month , Benfica travelled to Alvalade for the second Derby de Lisboa of the season . The game ended in a 3 ? 0 loss for Benfica . This was the Lions ' best result against Benfica since the 1986 ? 87 season .

On 4 May , Benfica played Alverca at home , where they lost 0 ? 2 , and in the writing of João Querido Manhã for Record , the fans " burst into protests at the end , after they lost patience with the errors , passivity and lack of talent of the whole team . " . On 13 May , Benfica went to Adelino Ribeiro Novo to face Gil Vicente . The game ended in a 3 ? 0 defeat ? their tenth loss within the league , matching their previous record in the 1996 ? 97 season . As a result , the club was overtaken by Belenenses in the league table . A week later , Benfica played host to Salgueiros in Da Luz . A final score of 1 ? 1 saved Benfica from a record fourth straight loss , and gave the Porto @-@ based side their first point all season against a top 7 team . Benfica played the last game of the season against Desportivo de Aves on the road . At one point in the game , the team was losing three @-@ nil , but managed to equalize and finish with a four @-@ all draw . Toni stated that " Everyone did not do their best to avoid that a historic club slipped into a position that is not

accustomed . " Benfica finished in a record @-@ breaking sixth place after the 34 @-@ game season with a tally of 15 wins , 9 draws and 10 losses that , together , summed up to 54 points . They were ninth @-@ lowest league @-@ wide in goals conceded ? 44 in all . On the plus side , they were fifth best in the league at goal @-@ scoring , with a total of 54 goals . Van Hooijdonk was the second most productive player in the Primeira Liga with 19 goals .

= = Results = =

Win Draw Loss Postponed

= = = Overall record = = =

= = = Primeira Liga = = =

= = = = League table = = = =

Source : ForaDeJogo