

86. Adrien Rabiot

Club: Paris Saint Germain

Date of Birth: 3rd April 1995

Position: Midfielder

At just 18 years of age and barely being an adult, PSG's Adrien Rabiot is the youngest player to make this year's GFFN 100. The Frenchman started 2013 by going on loan to Toulouse, a successful spell which then propelled him into PSG's first team for the 2013/2014 season.

Rabiot will tend to play positionally as the furthest forward central midfielder in a PSG trio, but has shown immense desire to track back and do the defensive midfield dog work as well. He has looked impressively composed this year despite playing alongside some of the greatest players in Ligue 1 as well as against Champions League opposition. There is something serene about the way Rabiot operates on the pitch, a quality similar to that of Mesut Özil. Never rising to the provocations of the opposition, never upset with his teammates for making a mistake and never lambasting the referee when a decision does not go his team's way (a rarity for a PSG player these days). It is astounding to showcase that touch of class at the age of 18. One could however argue that Rabiot is merely shy.

He is of course technically gifted, but at 6ft2 his power and stamina are probably his most desirable characteristics. There is something of a Yaya Touré quality about Rabiot which is partly why he is speculated to be the star of PSG for years to come, although the midfielder has recently announced that he needs more playing time to convince him to stay at the club, despite being only the age of 18. Rabiot sat down for urgent talks with the PSG staff this summer amid interest from the likes of Arsenal and Chelsea, in order to discuss his future with the Champions. Rabiot has also made a number of open comments about staying at PSG, such as claiming he would do 'everything' for first team football and announcing that 'for now I am Parisien'. Thus, it remains to be seen whether Rabiot will still be at PSG by the end of 2014, but putting off field issues aside, Rabiot has made major headway in 2013, be it in the purple colours of Toulouse or the blue of PSG.



Rabiot's time at Toulouse saw him complete a fine loan spell in which he fitted in like a glove, both on and off the field, was rounded off by a brilliant strike towards the end of last season against Brest, where he cut inside from the right hand side and hit the ball with his left foot into the top corner from the best part of 35 yards. Such a goal showed what Rabiot is capable of and this was not his only contribution; silky midfield displays helped to propel Toulouse up towards a higher mid-table finish. He played 12 games for Toulouse, which were mostly from the starting XI and contributed one goal and a few assists. Rabiot's dribbling is what largely sets him aside from other Ligue 1 players in his position. Very few players are able to glide on the ball, especially at 6ft2 but this allows Rabiot to gain vast amounts of territory before passing the ball off to a teammate who will then be in a dangerous position. The 18 year old is also very strong at moving the ball about the field, with a passing success rate of close to 90% for the calendar year.

His character won him friends at the Toulouse setup, despite being there for a relatively short period of time. Quiet, polite but determined, Rabiot seems to win over the vast majority of coaches he deals with, forcing as much game time out of them as possible.

Rabiot also made his mark on an international level this calendar year; the Frenchman played a key role in the U19 European Championships this summer and helped France to reach the final of the tournament, where unfortunately, they lost 1-0 to Serbia. Rabiot has also recently featured in Willy Sagnol's U21 side, putting in a good performance against Armenia.

At 18, Rabiot it is not outlandish to suggest that the PSG man can become one of the best midfielders in the world. There are of course areas of his game that suggest weakness, including the sometimes wayward nature of his shooting, but the faith Laurent Blanc has shown in him now suggests that we are looking at one of France's future greats, and that is no understatement.

'Honestly I didn't expect it. I just back myself but I'm playing more and more it is great.'

Adrien Rabiot

On playing for PSG- 12th November 2013

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