

## 23. Grzegorz Krychowiak

Club: Stade de Reims

Date of Birth: 29th January 1990

Position: Midfielder



Bordeaux rid of a Polish midfielder who was destined to become one of the most impressive commanders of the centre of the park five years on in 2013. Not for Bordeaux but for newly promoted side Stade de Reims, a team that everybody predicted would crash and burn in the top tier of French football.

Just as Reims have been proving their doubters wrong throughout 2013, so to has Krychowiak to his former employers. When Les Girondins shipped him out on loan for the first time in 2008, the then Polish U21 international was forced to start from the very bottom of the French footballing ladder, working hard to win a trial at the then third division battling Champagne-Ardenne located side before securing a loan deal which was later extended by a year after a stellar set of performances secured Krychowiak the support of the Reims faithful at a very early stage in his Rémois career.

Fast-forward another year when Krychowiak was loaned to FC Nantes this time as Bordeaux tried to see if the player was truly able to adapt to different surroundings and that he had not become accustomed to Reims life so much so that FCGB may lose a player with on a permanent basis, if his love for SDR became too strong. Either way, it didn't matter as Bordeaux decided in 2012 that they were not interested in keeping the powerful deep-lying midfielder, despite the glimpses of quality he had shown over this three year period away on loan.

At 6 ft 1, Krychowiak is a strong and coordinated footballer who's lanky legs act allow him to propel himself into challenges with relative calm and this certainly contributes to the fact that the defensive midfielder rarely ever picks up red cards. Most defensive midfielders are more adept to one side of the game than the other. Some are more able in terms of breaking up opposition's attacks and others are better at kick-starting attacks for their own team. Well, Krychowiak is accomplished in both of the aforementioned areas. His distribution has been one of the secrets to Reims' unexpected Ligue 1 successes this calendar year. Not only have Reims staved off the threat of relegation, but, since the 2013/2014 campaign has begun, they have been flirting with the possibility of finishing in a continental qualification position- extraordinarily rapid progress for Hubert Fournier's men.

Krychowiak is very much at the forefront of where the plaudits should be directed to in congratulating Reims on their achievements. His reliable right foot allows him to direct lengthy passes out to tricky wingers including the likes of Floyd Ayité who are then able to take defenders on with their impressive speed and agility.

Krychowiak has two main sources of goalmouth action. The first is from the penalty spot. Four of his six Ligue 1 goals in 2013 were notched up thorough his successful execution of a spot-kick. He has a tendency to hit driven shots into the middle extreme right or left corners of the goal, making it very difficult for opposing goalkeepers to stop his efforts, even if they manage to guess the direction of his penalty, because of the sheer pace which he puts behind them.

Krychowiak's secondary source of goals is through his intelligent positioning in the box at the far post. The Polish international will generally tend to float into the right far post especially to tidy up the pieces should the corner or free kick delivery elude every other player in the box. This was a notably effective tactic, which he deployed against PSG in Reims' famous victory over Les Parisiens at the Stade Auguste Delaune in March of 2013.

In terms of his future, Krychowiak has a gentleman's agreement with Reims President Jean-Pierre Calliot that he can leave the club next summer after rejected approaches from the Bundesliga, Lyon and St Étienne in July and August. Wherever Krychowiak's next adventure takes him, we wish him well. Ligue 1 will certainly be a poorer place devoid of the Pole's defensive midfield majesty.

*'It is a really nice region. There a nice houses wherever you go. The Rémois are very proud of that, I understand.'*

Grzegorz Krychowiak

10th August 2013

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