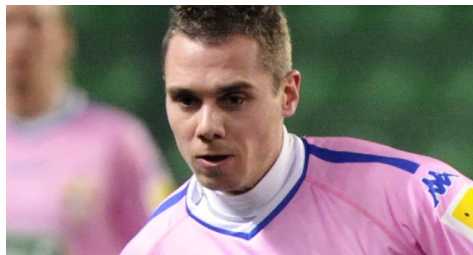


61. Kevin Berigaud

Club: Evian TG FC

Date of Birth: 9th May 1988

Position: Attacker



While many professionals have to make many club changes at both youth and senior levels to finally find somewhere where they feel truly accepted, Kevin Berigaud has never faced such complications. Evian's marquee attacker for the vast majority of 2013, Berigaud spent eight years perfecting his football from the ages of eight to sixteen with Swiss side Servette before making the short move to the Annecy-based Ligue 1 side, hopping just across the border in the process into France. There, Berigaud has remained ever since.

With 5 goals in his first 5 games at the beginning of this 2013/2014 campaign, one can be forgiven for acting a little surprised as Berigaud sprung, seemingly out of nowhere, onto the map of one of Ligue 1's most dangerous goal-scorers, sharing the limelight with the likes of Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Falcao in the early part of this season.

In the current Evian set up that Berigaud finds himself in, he is expected to perform as a very complete centre-forward. This admittedly is a role in which he often becomes isolated, as Les Roses are typically forced to tire throughout Ligue 1 matches without the ball, often operating offensively only really on the counter attack. At 1.78m, Berigaud is not remarkably tall for a lone striker, but his ferocious physical nature often compensates for this.

This paralleled with his genuine ability to strike the ball using a variety of different methods, be it driving or placing the ball past the keeper, has made Berigaud a serious threat for French defences. This was most poignantly evidenced in a Ligue 1 match in August 2013 against Rennes when the Brittany side's defence allowed Berigaud too much space on the edge of the area and he was able to hit a lovely, looping shot into the far corner.

Unfortunately for the Thonon-born forward, he suffered a thigh injury in the middle of October 2013 when he was going through a period of high confidence and consistent goal scoring and is yet to return as we reach the close of the calendar year.

At the age of 24, we most probably have yet to see the best of Kevin Berigaud, although there are some serious failings in his current style of play that perhaps explain why the Frenchman has never attracted serious interest from a club of a more elevated status than that of the often relegation-threatened Evian.

Although Berigaud's forward runs in behind defences are often intelligent and quirky, he does not make enough of them to provide a consistent threat for Evian to score the multitude of goals they need on a game-by-game basis to compensate for the shaky defensive midfield they currently host which is often at fault for the vast number the Ligue 1 side seems to concede. Indeed, 9 Ligue 1 goals in the calendar year of 2013 is simply not enough for Berigaud to make a case for a big career move. The rather typical excuses will be outlined by the player's loyal supporters that he has suffered injuries at crucial periods or that his teammates have not been providing him with the calibre of service he deserves, but the reality is that football is tough. In order to work his way to the top, Berigaud must stop relying on others and produce consistent moments of brilliance in 2014 to force the rest of France to pay him more attention.

Berigaud however merits the elevated position of #61 in this year's GFFN 100 because of his increased rate of tirelessness in attack and jaw-dropping goals specifically in 2013. He is a fighter and must learn to focus his energies into making intelligent runs for 90 minutes rather than berating teammates, the opposition or the officials.

The Frenchman has an extremely close bond with Evian manager Pascal Dupraz, who has known him since Berigaud's teenage years and the pair have grown through the ranks simultaneously, one on the managerial side and the other on the playing side. At the age of 24, Berigaud may well experience a year in which he finally steps out of the comfort zone that currently surrounds him at Evian and leave a proper mark on Ligue 1 in this 2013/2014 campaign, should he recover from that thigh injury.

'Kevin has the potential to become one of France's greatest attackers.'

Pascal Dupraz

On Kevin Berigaud - 17th April 2013

DID YOU KNOW? Kevin Berigaud played an integral part in Evian's promotion through three different divisions in four seasons, scoring 43 goals from 2008-2012.