

79. Lucas Ocampos

Club: AS Monaco

Date of Birth: 11th July 1994

Position: Attacker



It could be argued that for a player with such widely-recognised talent as Lucas Ocampos, 79th is a fairly low position for the Argentinian to be finding himself in.

Despite a good start to 2013 playing a key offensive role in Monaco's promotion from Ligue 2, Ocampos has been over-shadowed by several of his new team-mates since they were promoted to the top division. Ocampos has been resigned to the bench for almost half of ASM's games so far in the 2013/2014 season, but at the age of just 19, the winger has plenty of time to make the desired impact in France and go on to even greater things, as has been predicted of him.

Having signed for Monaco in June 2012 for around sixteen million euros, Ocampos began to impress with his direct running style, exciting the albeit minimal home support at the Stade Louis II by taking opposition players on and beating them with superior skill and anticipation. Ocampos' performances are generally pleasing on the eye, undoubtedly a reason for the player's rise in fame throughout European football.

Ligue 2 defences were simply no match for him, with the player's raw ability proving too much for the vast majority of the technically limited second tier defences. Despite the ease in which Ocampos navigated his way around Ligue 2 opposition, he was never once complacent. According to various staff members who have worked with the 19 year old, Ocampos is strictly committed to his career and dedicates more hours than the majority of players to the training field. The attacking midfielder was likened to Cristiano Ronaldo by his team-mates during his days at River because of his superior dribbling abilities. The player is a workhorse and this is best evidenced by the amount of tracking back he endures game after game. In the first half of the year in Ligue 2, he often formed a watertight partnership with Layvin Kurzawa the left back, by double-teaming to prevent opposition attacks down Monaco's left hand side.

One criticism of Ocampos during his time at Monaco thus far is that he has been wasteful in the final third and in fact in front of the goal itself. Ocampos' delivery from out wide tends to be too deep and behind his striking teammates. The winger completes all the hard work effectively by running at the defence and beating people, but his decision making in terms of when to cross and when to cut inside and shoot lets him down at times. Ocampos, though, is not short of confidence and makes audacious attempts to score from any angle and any distance.

The 19 year old will surely learn to be less selfish in the future, but his assists count of zero for the season so far sums up his performance on a creative front these last six months. It appears that Ocampos's exhilarating form from Ligue 2 has not been carried into this season and the 19 year old has not adjusted to life in the top league quite as well as hoped. Then again, the arrival of James Rodriguez and the emergence of Anthony Martial has created severe competition for the Argentinian in the wide positions. A January loan move may be a shrewd decision for both club and player in a bid to more actively exploit the potential Ocampos has for future seasons.

However, it has not all been doom and gloom for the Argentinian in the second half of this year, although admittedly, it is the first part of the year which has propelled Ocampos into the GFFN 100. The 19 year old has specifically mastered the killer through ball and has managed to set up waves of attack this way. Ocampos came off the bench recently in a 3-0 win against Nice and provided a threat throughout his twenty two minutes on the pitch, including a few mazy runs on the right hand side and he was gifted a goal towards the end, which was aided by his pressing of the opposition defence.

Ocampos played his last game for an Argentinian under 17 side in 2011, but has not been selected for an under 20 or 21 side as yet and he needs to improve his consistency before this can happen. Overall, 2013 has been a year of two halves for the midfielder, as despite a brilliant start whilst playing in Ligue 2, the player is yet to fully adjust in the top division and is not starting week in week out due to competition. However, at the age of 19 and with such obvious talent, the player has plenty of time to make that step up and beyond and we are sure he will do so.

'As soon as we reach Ligue 1, we will do everything we can to do better than PSG.'

Lucas Ocampos

22nd April 2013

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