# 30. Maxwell



**Club**: Paris Saint Germain

**Date of Birth**: 27th August 1981

**Position**: Defender

In went another. 5-0 to Barcelona: a totally dominating display produced yet again by the Spanish giants. But Maxwell looked on from the bench, wishing that he was playing to celebrate with his teammates. Frankly, it was the story of the Brazilian's season during that particular campaign. In the first 18 games Barcelona played, Maxwell had started just 4 of them. He did not want to finish his career like this, watching others play football. Logically, one can retire to do that. Luckily for him, the January transfer window was just around the corner, and an up-and-coming French side were on the lookout...

As we know, Maxwell signed for Paris Saint Germain in January 2012, and soon enough his fortunes began to change. He was given far more playing time at PSG than he was at Barcelona, and after relatively little minutes played in the more physical French league, the Brazilian began to build up his fitness once again- no mean feat for the then 30 year old to achieve. As soon as he was eligible, he started the first six matches in and once he reacted in a positive way to the immediate responsibility placed upon his shoulders, he produced the confidence necessary to express himself as the season went on. It was almost as if the full-back felt he had to prove his own ability to himself again, before really settling in the French capital.

In the 2012/13 season, Maxwell played in 33 of the 38 Ligue 1 games, on the way to helping PSG win the Ligue 1 title. He also managed 2 goals and 3 assists, an impressive record for a player of his position. This meant that he was involved in 5 goals over the course of the season, more than any other defender in the team, as well as the majority of the midfielders. Clearly, Maxwell is particularly strong going forward.

Maxwell's attacking contribution during this first half of the season is already almost as substantial as his totals for the whole of the 2012/2013 campaign. Maxwell already has an impressive 2 goals and 2 assists in the league, meaning he has played a part in 4 goals in total. In the PSG squad as a whole, only Lucas (7), Cavani (12) and Ibrahimovic (21) have been involved in more goals. Over the course of 2013, it is evident that not only has Maxwell been valuable in defensive terms, but he also provides Les Parisiens with wide option when they look to formulate attacking moves.

The latest statistics also suggest that when Maxwell plays, his teammates thrive on it. PSG have only lost 2 competitive games so far this season, against Benfica in the Champions League and Evian in Ligue 1, conceding 2 goals on both occasions. In both of these games, Maxwell did not play. Having said this, Maxwell can sometimes be a liability at the back with his attacking style of play. In the league this season, without Maxwell PSG on average keep a clean sheet 57% of the time. With Maxwell, though, that figure falls to a considerably lower 42%. Although Maxwell is provides a forward option, he can be liable at the back.

So, what is Maxwell's style of play? Well, as the statistics have shown, he is never afraid to attack from his left back position, as indeed is the Barcelona way. Having spent years developing the technical side of his game at the Nou Camp, Maxwell is extremely comfortable on the ball, both in terms of dribbling and in terms of passing or crossing. In defence, he is solid in 1 on 1 situations and it is often very hard to pass Maxwell if he is in front of you. However, as he is often higher up the pitch, he tends to leave a few gaps behind him in defence, which explains the aforementioned clean sheet statistic.

Overall, Maxwell has been a valuable constant in the PSG setup over the course of 2013. He has been a fundamental part of the Paris Saint Germain defensive line-up, and poses a considerable threat going forward, as well as being a diligent defender. In the summer of 2013, the arrival of one of the most promising French left backs in football at present in the form of Lucas Digne may have been a cause for concern for the veteran Brazilian who now has an obvious successor. However, as the first half of the 2013/2014 campaign showed, Digne was generally kept out of the starting XI for the more experienced Maxwell. How much longer this will be the case is not immediately clear, and with Maxwell set to be celebrating his thirty-third birthday in 2014, he might as well cherish the game-time he is currently receiving.

*'He is extraordinary. Always open and happy to give advice. He speaks perfect French as well!'*
Lucas Digne
On Maxwell- 5th September 2013

**DID YOU KNOW?** Maxwell earned his first senior international cap for Brazil at the grand old age of 31, on the 14th August 2013 in a friendly match vs Switzerland.