

## 68. Alexandre Lacazette

Club: Olympique Lyonnais

Date of Birth: 28th May 1991

Position: Attacker



Despite what could be called a very poor 2013 for Lyon, forward Alexandre Lacazette has gone from strength to strength and the fallout of Bafétimbi Gomis with the club appears to have helped him to pin down a first team place and from this platform he has been able to perform.

It is fair to say that 2013 could be described as a break-through year for the 22 year old. As much as he was a first team regular in 2011 and 2012, in 2013, Lacazette has been given the minutes to perform consistently more and has also been noticed by his country in the process. Lacazette played in two international friendlies at the start of 2013, and although he has yet to play for Les Bleus since, a call up for the World Cup has to be in the back of Didier Deschamps' mind considering the lack of goals that the current front men in Giroud and Benzema have produced in World Cup qualifying.

In terms of form for Les Gones, Lacazette started the majority of the 2012/2013 season on the wing and helped his team more with assists rather than scoring goals. In the last 6 months, however, Lacazette, has played more games upfront and Lyon as a whole appear to have reaped the rewards.

The player's standout game in 2013 came recently in a 1-1 draw with Toulouse, where Lacazette scored with a thunderbolt into the bottom corner from the edge of the area as well as creating various chances and linking up well with the then recently-returned Bafétimbi Gomis. On his performances alone, Lyon were unlucky not to come away with all three points and indeed the Frenchman was named man of the match.

As with many other players in this GFFN 100, Lacazette's versatility and ability to play in different positions separates him from the rest. The player has played in three different positions this year, on the left, the right and down the centre.

As mentioned, Lacazette does appear to now be thriving down the middle as a sort of second striker, but he has had game-time down the wings this season and played just as well. Having said that, Lacazette has already scored more goals than last season and so striker has to be his main, long-term position.

Even in games when Lyon haven't been at the races so far this season, Lacazette has been the stand out performer and if he continues with this vein of form. If Lyon's poor form remains, the Frenchman could attract interest from many other clubs. At the age of 22, Lacazette's progress is reaching that optimal stage of rapidity as he has the sufficient confidence to hone in on his greatest attributes in match situations. Lacazette is a danger for the opposition on the counter attack due to his pace and has scored a few goals on the break this year. He has a good understanding with the likes of Clement Grenier and has often been played in by that very team-mate. The forward's sharp movement is also something which is difficult for the opposition to contain, with Lacazette often making wily runs across a side's back four before darting forward to receive a ball through. Lacazette's timing of his runs is not always perfect and he has probably been caught offside too often for his liking over the last year.

However, it has not all been plain-sailing for the 22 year old. Discipline does appear to be an issue for the player who has tendencies to pick up yellow cards and worse. He has already picked up two red cards as 2013 closes in instances where his emotions appeared to have boiled over. At such a young age, this can occur, but it perhaps shows that mentally and in terms of maturity, Lacazette is not yet quite the full package. However, he has much time to ameliorate his temperament with the right sort of guidance.

Overall, Lacazette has been a shining light in a poor season thus far for Lyon. If he keeps performing in this manner in a team where the best players, in Gonalons, Grenier and Gomis do look set to leave soon, then his future could lie elsewhere. However, for the time being, Lacazette's ability to run at people, provide and score goals, as well as shoot from range is causing opponents difficulty and allowing him to thrive for Les Gones, earning him a place in this year's GFFN 100.

*'In my head, I have not done enough time at this club yet.'*

Alexandre Lacazette

25th December 2013

**DID YOU KNOW?** Alexandre Lacazette has represented France at all seven different levels, from U16's to the senior side.