

85. Brandão

Club: AS Saint Étienne

Date of Birth: 16th June 1980

Position: Attacker

Not many clubs in France had as successful a 2013 as Saint-Etienne and one major contributing factor to their success has been the form of Brazilian forward Brandão.

The 33-year-old joined Les Verts in the summer of 2012 on a free from fellow Ligue 1 side Marseille and since then he hasn't looked back. In 2013 alone, he made 24 appearances scoring on 9 occasions as he helped ASSE capture their first piece of silverware since 1981.

The latter half of the 2012/13 season played out beyond belief for both the man and his club, with Brandão's 8 league goals helping his side finish fifth, perhaps only a disappointment due to the fact they challenged for a Champions League place all season long before that.

They did win a spot in the Europa League though thanks to their 1-0 Coupe de la Ligue victory over Stade Rennais, courtesy of a Brandão winner after 18 minutes. Their first cup win in over three decades thanks to the Brazilian capped off what was an excellent 2013 for ASSE. Brandão proved his worth as a big game player again, as he has done throughout his career.

The start to the 2013/14 season has been a little harder for the Brazilian, impacted by the loss of Brandão's striking partner Pierre Emerick Aubameyang leaving for Borussia Dortmund and his own injury woes. He's only managed to play nine times so far and has found the net just once, on the opening day of the season against Ajaccio.

The addition of Melvut Erdinç in the summer has helped alleviate some of the pressure off Brandão but the two are yet to form a true partnership up front. However, he has helped Saint-Etienne enter the winter break in fifth and just a point off fourth-placed Bordeaux, so they are in a prime spot for him when he returns to the form we are more accustomed to.

Brandão as a footballer is a prime example of a predator inside the penalty area. When the ball is in the final third of the pitch, expect the Brazilian to be lurking in and around the penalty spot looking for a position to attack an incoming cross or through ball.



This fits perfectly with his style of play and in particular is aerial ability, as he regularly scores with his head. Tall and with a good leap, he rises above defenders with ease and then has the skill to plant the ball into the corners and out of the reach of the goalkeeper.

Much like other poachers before him, he's also an expert in finding that extra yard of space to gain an advantage. Whether that's making a small run and then pulling out to slot a ball home from a few yards or a short burst in front of a defender to nudge it goalwards, he's an incisive forward that tends to make the right decision when closing in on goal.

Despite making two assists this calendar year, Brandão isn't necessarily seen as a workhorse in the side. He can hold up play but prefers to distribute it to more creative forces before making runs into the box to get on the end of plays rather than begin them himself. You can argue that the Brazilian is often lazy and is not easily motivated, evidenced by the frequent offside calls against him in each appearance he makes.

There is also a reason to why he's not at a top club or in the national set-up and that's because he's not always consistently good. He can be a little wayward even with easy chances, which is disappointing when it's his good movement that allows him the opportunities in the first place. He's also not particularly willing to make a chance for himself, he doesn't tend to run with the ball unless through on goal and rarely shoot from distance.

Looking ahead, Brandão seems to be in the right team, abundant with talented playmakers that like to put balls in the box and it works well with the striker's style. Hopefully he's a little more injury-free in 2014 and can return to the early form of 2013 that saw him really contribute to his club's success.

'Brandão isn't someone who talks much, but his performances do the talking instead.'

Loïc Perrin

15th February 2013

DID YOU KNOW? In July 2013, Brandão had a bust-up with his club St Étienne which nearly saw him being sold. The player refused to return to training after holidays and was heavily fined by President Romeyer.